THE NEW SUNDAY EXPRESS

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AS RUPEE'S FALL CONTINUES, RBI GUV SAYS NO LEVEL FOR CURRENCY IN MIND

Market forces decide the value of rupee and the central bank is not worried about day-to-day movement of the currency value, he said

FOCUS IS ON LONG-TERM VALUE, SAYS MALHOTRA

"There is no change in RBI's approach. It does not look at any price level or band," Sanjay Malhotra said, adding the central bank focuses on the value of the rupee in the medium to long term and not on its daily movement. His comment comes a day after the rupee recovered 9 paise from its all-time low level to close at 87.50 against the US dollar

'DEPRECIATION DUE TO GLOBAL UNCERTAINTIES'

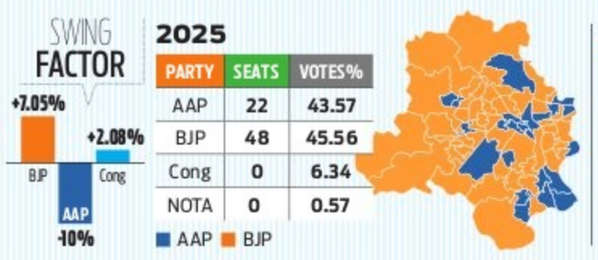
- About 5% depreciation impacts inflation to the extent of 30-35 bps, Malhotra said, adding the RBI weighed the current rupee-dollar rate while working out the growth and inflation projections for the next FY
- He said most of the depreciation in the Indian currency is driven by the global uncertainties caused by Donald Trump's trade wars P12

613th

MEET OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RBI WAS HELD ON SATURDAY

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

HOW THE ELECTORAL MAP OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI CHANGED IN 10 YEARS FROM 2015 TO 2025



2025

PARTY	SEATS	VOTES%
AAP	22	43.57
BJP	48	45.56
Cong	0	6.34
NOTA	0	0.57

AAP BJP

2020

PARTY	SEATS	VOTES%
AAP	62	53.8
BJP	8	38.7
Cong	0	4.26
NOTA	0	0.5

AAP BJP(NDA)

2015

PARTY	SEATS	VOTES%
AAP	67	53.3
BJP	3	32.3
Cong	0	9.65
NOTA	0	0.5

AAP BJP(NDA)

DELHI AAM AADMI TURNS TO BJP

WITH MODI'S GUARANTEES RIVALLING KEJRIWAL'S HANDOUTS, BJP WRESTS POWER AFTER 27 YEARS; GRAFT, POOR GOVERNANCE, POLLUTION, GOING SOLO HURT AAP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE BJP wrested power in Delhi after 27 years, delivering a decisive blow to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the 70-member assembly, with Saturday's results establishing its dominance in the national capital and giving the divided opposition enough points to ponder over.

The BJP's massive victory saw Arvind Kejriwal and most of his party's biggies, including Manish Sisodia, lose, while the Congress was decimated, failing to open its account for the third consecutive time.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the party's performance, calling it a triumph of "development, vision, and trust". He said that the BJP would make Yamuna river as the identity of the capital.

During the last leg of the campaign, Kejriwal had alleged that the BJP-led Haryana government had been poisoning the Yamuna, adding had the Delhi Jal Board not stopped its water from coming into the city, it would have triggered genocide. It fueled a major uproar with the Election Commission getting into the act, issuing a notice to Kejriwal.

Home to over 3.3 crore people, power in Delhi's assembly eluded the BJP for over 25 years despite its meteoric rise under Modi since 2014. However, the party's persistence finally paid off. Its strategy focused on addressing critical issues impacting daily life, especially corruption charges against AAP leaders, including Kejriwal, along with Yamuna and air pollution, and the excise policy scam. The BJP gained from RSS's efforts, which organised more than 1,000 meetings.

The income tax relief in the Union Budget drew the middle class away from the AAP.

As for AAP, allegations of corruption, lack of civic amenities and development, and the absence of fresh ideas to captivate the public imagination proved to be a major setback, resulting in its worst performance since its electoral debut in 2013.

YOUR VERDICT

BJP's Parvesh Verma defeated Kejriwal by 4,089 votes from the New Delhi seat while Sisodia was defeated by BJP's Tarvinder Singh Marwah by 675 votes in Jangpura. The result gave the INDIA bloc a lesson or two in unity, as the Congress and AAP went it alone. At least in 11 seats, AAP lost due to a split in opposition votes. For example, Kejriwal lost by 4,089 votes while Sandeep Dikshit (Cong) stood third with 4,568 votes from the same seat. Had AAP and the Congress fought together, Kejriwal could have squeaked through.

There is relief of liberating Delhi from 'AAP-da'. I thank all Delhiites for putting their faith in 'Modi ki guarantee'

- **Narendra Modi, PM**

Will clean up Yamuna: Modi

RAJESH THAKUR @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said people of Delhi have rejected the politics of appeasement and put their faith in *Modi ka guarantee*.

Addressing party workers after the BJP's victory in the Delhi Assembly elections, Modi stated that the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) 'politics of shortcuts' had been short-circuited.

"This is a historic win, not a usual victory, as the people of Delhi have shown the door to 'AAP-da'. Delhi has become *Aapda-mukt*," he said, adding the BJP's double-engine government would now ensure Delhi's development at double speed.

During his address, Modi promised to clean up the Yamuna and accused the AAP government of neglecting the river. "I had pledged during the election campaign that we will make Yamunaji the identity of Delhi. No matter how much time is spent or how much energy is used, we will make every effort to serve the Yamuna," Modi said.

He also promised that the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report, which revealed a revenue loss of ₹2,026 crore due to the Delhi government's excise policy, would be tabled in the first sitting of the Delhi Assembly after the BJP forms the government.

"The AAP left no stone unturned to create various conspiracies every day to win the Assembly elections, but I guarantee that the CAG report will be presented in the first Assembly session, and whoever has looted Delhi will have to answer," he said.

Turning his attention to the Congress, Modi said the fact that the party had not won a single seat in Delhi in the last three elections indicated that the people had little trust in its leadership. He accused Congress leadership of speaking the language of urban Naxals.

We humbly accept the mandate. Heartfelt thanks to all the Congress workers and voters for their dedication. Our fight for the progress of Delhi and the rights of its people will continue

Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader

We accept the mandate of the people with great humility. I congratulate the BJP for this victory and I hope they will fulfil all the promises for which people have voted for them

Arvind Kejriwal, AAP convenor

I believe this mandate is an unprecedented support for strong leadership, economic growth & national security

HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister

FOCUS SHIFTS TO BJP's CM PICK

ANUP VERMA @ New Delhi

THE BJP fought the Delhi elections without a chief ministerial face. Now that it has won a two-thirds majority, the big question is: who will head the party's first government in the capital in 27 years?

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the Central leadership will take the CM call. Several names have been doing the rounds in recent days, including Bansuri Swaraj, Virendra Sachdeva, Pravesh Verma, Vijender Gupta, Manoj Tiwari, Satish Upadhyay, Manjinder Singh Sirsa and Rekha Gupta.

Bansuri Swaraj, the daughter of the late Sushma Swaraj, has a good rapport with the party's state and central leadership but is a rookie. Her mother was the last BJP chief minister of Delhi. Sachdeva, as the party's Delhi president, enjoys support of the central leadership. Pravesh Verma could be the choice if the BJP opts for a Jat leader.

Rekha Gupta and Virendra Sachdeva

Manoj Tiwari is a popular figure among Purvanchali voters in Delhi and enjoys significant support due to his career as a Bhojpuri film star. Satish Upadhyay, a former Delhi BJP president, has held various party positions since the 1990s.

Vijender Gupta, a three-time MLA and Leader of the Opposition in the assembly, could be considered because of his extensive experience. Manjinder Singh Sirsa is a prominent Punjabi face in Delhi politics. Rekha Gupta has public service experience. She was a councillor in the past. Rekha defeated AAP's Vandana Kumari at Shalimar Bagh.

If the trend set in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan are anything to go by, the BJP may consider someone from the OBC or Jat communities as CM.

RAHUL

FIR against MP for 'anti-national remark'

Odisha police on Friday registered an FIR against Rahul Gandhi on charges of making anti-national statements. This was following a complaint from Jharsuguda district unit of BJP | P5

Maximum Namma Metro fare up by 50%

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

NAMMA METRO users will have to pay more for their ride from Sunday. While the minimum fare remains unchanged at Rs 10, the maximum fare has increased by 50%, from Rs 60 to Rs 90.

BMRCL, which operates Namma Metro, has revised the fares after nearly eight years based on the recommendations of the Fare Fixation Committee (FFC).

For distances ranging from 0-2 km, passengers will continue to pay a minimum fare of Rs 10. For 2-4 km, the fare has been increased to Rs 20, and for 4-6 km, it will be Rs 30. For 6-8 km, passengers will have to pay Rs 40. Those travelling 8-10 km will have to pay Rs 50. The fare for 10-15 km will be Rs 60, and for 15-20 km, Rs 70. For 20-25 km, the fare will be Rs 80, and for 25-30 km, Rs 90. Even for over 30 km, the fare will be Rs 90.

A discount of 5% for smart card users will continue. Off-peak hours will see an additional 5% discount, taking the total discount to 10% for those travelling between noon and 4 pm, and after 9 pm on weekdays. Further, smart card users will enjoy a 10% discount on Sundays and national holidays -- January 26, August 15, and October 2 — throughout the day. However, smart card users should maintain a minimum balance of Rs 90 (previously Rs 50). The discount is not applicable to those using QR codes.

Tourist and group ticket fares have also been revised. The one-day tourist card will now cost Rs 300, while the three-day card will cost Rs 600. The five-day tourist card will cost Rs 800. For group bookings, passengers will get discounts based on the group size. Groups of 25-99 will get a 15% discount and of 100-1,000 will receive 20%. Groups of more than 1,000 will enjoy a discount of 25%.

COMMUTERS FLAY MOVE: P5

WHAT YOU'LL PAY NOW

Distance slab	Revised fare
0-2 km	₹10
2-4 km	₹20
4-6 km	₹30
6-8 km	₹40
8-10 km	₹50
10-15 km	₹60
15-20 km	₹70
20-25 km	₹80
20-25 km	₹90
>30 km	₹90

NAAC debars 'corrupt' review team members, HEI involved for 5 yrs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

FOLLOWING the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe and arrest of three top officials of Koneru Lakshmaiah Educational Foundation (KLEF) in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, in an alleged bribery case to acquire higher grade accreditation to members of the National Assessment & Accreditation Council's (NAAC's) peer review team, the council's Executive Committee (EC) has debarred all seven members from assessment or any activities of NAAC "with immediate effect".

NAAC, in a press statement on Saturday, said it has also been decided to review all recent review visits by these seven members to any of the higher education institutions (HEIs), whose accreditation grading results are not declared.

NAAC's EC has also decided to not only summarily cancel KLEF's accreditation process but also debar it from applying for accreditati9on for five years.

The CBI had arrested three top officials of KLEF over allegations that they had offered bribes to NAAC's peer review team member to secure A++ accreditation rating.

NAAC evaluates the quality of education and infrastructure in universities and colleges on a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) from 1.51 to 4.00 and grades them for five years from from 'A++' to 'C'. HEIs without accreditation are graded 'D'.

Following the case, NAAC has proposed to launch the Basic (Binary) Accreditation in April/May 2025, followed by Maturity-based Graded Levels (MBGL). Special committees are working on the preparation of framework and methodology for MBGL, the NAAC release said.

NAAC TO SHARE NEW SOPs: P5

PES UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS 2025

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M.Tech

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LAW
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PERFORMING ARTS
BA (Hons.)

PHARMACY
B.Pharm / M.Pharm / Pharm.D

DESIGN
Bachelor of Design

RESEARCH
Ph.D / M.Tech by Research

PSYCHOLOGY
B.Sc (Hons.) / M.Sc.

MANAGEMENT
MBA / BBA (Hons.) in Business Analytics / BBA - General / Sports Management / Hospitality & Event Management

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS
BCA / MCA

ARCHITECTURE
B.Arch

NURSING
B.Sc (Bachelor of Science)

ECONOMICS
B.Sc (Hons.)

ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES
B.Sc. (Hons) in Cardiac Care / Anaesthesia & OT / Medical Radiology & Imaging / Dialysis Therapy / Emergency / Medical Lab / Medical Science

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Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT)

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B.A (Hons) Liberal Arts
M.A in Public Policy
LLB (Hons)

PESU will use only JEE Main and KCET scores from 2025 for B.Tech

JEE MAIN KCET

Note: PESSAT will not be applicable for B.Tech Admission 2025

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ALMANAC TODAY
Sunday: 09.02.2025 • Year: Krodhi • Ayana: Uttarayana
Ritu: Sishira • Masa: Magha • Paksha: Shukla • Tithi: Dwadasi 7.59 pm
Nakshatra: Ardra 6.43 pm • Moon in Kataka Rashi • Rahukaala: 04:30 pm to 06:00 pm
Gulikakala: 03:00 pm to 04:30 pm • Yamaganda: 12:00 pm to 01:30 pm

MIN 15°C | MAX 31°C
FORECAST Sunny

Sunrise 06.44 am
Sunset 06.23 pm
Moonrise 03.31 pm
Moonset 03.59 am

AERO INDIA 2025

A STEALTH FIGHTER IN INDIA'S SIGHT?

PIC: SUKHOI DESIGN BUREAU/ANNA ZVEREVA

STEALTH FIGHTER JETS CURRENTLY IN SERVICE

- Sukhoi Su-57 (Russia)
- Chengdu J-20 (China)
- Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II
- Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor (USA)

PIC: N509FZ

PIC: USAF/MASTER SGT DONALD R ALLEN

PIC : US MARINE CORPS/LANCE CPL DAN T LE)

A model of the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) on display during Aero India 2021 | FLYINGDAGGERS45SQUADRON

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE

AERO India 2025 takes off tomorrow, with a much-anticipated fifth-generation stealth fighter 'duel' between Russia's Sukhoi Su-57 "Felon" and the US' Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II. Both are wooing India to pick its offer, while eyeing the host country's booming military market bristling with modernisation plans.

While the F-35 was on static display during Aero India 2023, the 2025 edition will mark Su-57's debut.

The Indian Air Force lacks a fifth-generation fighter. Its latest acquisition – the Dassault Rafale – is a 4.5-generation platform. Last year, the Cabinet Committee on Security headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Rs 15,000-crore indigenous fifth-generation Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) project for the IAF, and is expected to be inducted by 2035, placing India in a select club of nations with indigenous fifth-generation stealth aircraft.

China rapidly manufacturing and deploying its Chengdu J-20 (300+ have been built) and unveiling its sixth-generation fighter jet designs, leaves India facing a 15-year tech gap in combat aircraft development. Moreover, China is also looking at selling 40 'to-be-developed' Shenyang J-35s to Pakistan.

Defence analyst Angad Singh says, "China first flew the J-20 in 2011, and conclusively demonstrated that it was ahead, and even if Pakistan has in-principle access to China's technology, the fact remains that the latter cannot afford this sort of tech. But China may want to subsidise it to keep us off-balance. Today, we are looking at a 15-year gap in technology between us and China, and even if we are going to field our fifth-generation aircraft in the mid-2030s, the gap by then would have widened to 25 years."

With geopolitics in South Asia not witnessing the best of times currently, India senses an urgent need to quickly bolster its air combat might, including adding more aircraft to IAF's arsenal, which will involve fifth-generation fighters. China is surging ahead with heightening its air combat capabilities. Its two sixth-generation fighter jets — the larger, tail-less Chengdu J-36, and the smaller Shenyang J-50 – are seen as attempts to checkmate the US' air dominance. Besides, its play in the South Asian region – where it is also looking at selling its advanced J-17 fighters to Bangladesh, while already in talks with Pakistan for a fifth-generation fighter deal – is concerning. It is in this scenario that the two fifth-generation fighters are expected to square off at the biennial air show, eyeing to serve India's telling fifth-generation fighter aircraft requirement. Both seem to be in the fray to become ideal choices to fill that one gap in the IAF at the moment.

The long wait for take-off

In early 2007, India and Russia agreed to jointly study and develop a fifth-generation stealth fighter. Known as the Sukhoi/HAL Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA), it was based on the new Su-57, which was being developed jointly by Sukhoi and HAL for the IAF. The completed FGFA, with 43 improvements over the Su-57, included advanced sensors, networking and combat avionics, and was to be a two-seater (for Indian version), for pilot and weapon systems operator (WSO). However, in 2018, India withdrew from the FGFA programme, owing to a series of issues, both technical and financial, according to reports.

BIG PICTURE

Subsequently, the AMCA, led by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in collaboration with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), emerged as India's resolve to arm itself with a fifth-generation combat aircraft, which was not only meant to act as a solution to rejuvenate an ageing IAF fleet, but also to counter the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF). The proposed 25-tonne twin-engine AMCA, is slated to be larger than other fighters in the IAF hangar, boasting of advanced stealth features, enabling it to fly undetected by enemy radar. The AMCA Mk1 variant would be powered by the American 90-kN GE414 engine, while the more advanced Mk2 would get the more powerful 110-kN engine, developed by DRDO's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE), in collaboration with a foreign defence partner. Most significantly, the AMCA project highlights India's 'Atmanirbharta' pursuit of furthering its own advanced defence industry.

Back in 2009, the then UPA government had allocated Rs 90 crore, followed by an additional Rs 447 crore, for a feasibility study on AMCA. However, progress remained staggered, until the March of last year, when the Union Cabinet gave its nod for the programme. And yet at present, a series of technical challenges, particularly with the engine, continue to impair its pace of development. Analysts expect the first flight of AMCA to take place in a year or two, with the aircraft expected to enter service only in the early 2030s. "In terms of AMCA, one cannot build an aircraft in the absence of an engine, unless one has a deal with a global OEM. We must look at a comprehensive strategic partnership which leads on to the engine, and ultimately an aircraft. Today, if we try to rapidly pursue AMCA and believe that the first aircraft will be inducted in the next 2-3 years, it's unlikely to happen," Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS) Director General, Air Vice Marshal Anil Golani (Retd) told TNSE.

So, until India does roll out its first fifth-generation fighter, amid the prevailing reality of a reduced, ageing fleet, while our neighbours rearm themselves, the question is should the country look at foreign offerings in the interim? In this context, the participation of the Su-57 and F-35 to Aero India becomes more significant.

Su-57 v/s F-35: Pros and cons

Russian state arms exporter Rosoboronexport Director General Alexander Mikheev has been quoted as saying that India has been offered a comprehensive partnership under the Su-57E project, which includes local manufacturing capabilities. "Our proposals include supply of assembled aircraft, the organisation of their joint production in India, and assistance in developing an Indian fifth-generation fighter," Mikheev was quoted as saying by Sputnik India.

"Rosoboronexport and the Indian side are working to expand bilateral technological cooperation within the framework of the 'Make in India' programme. We offer our partners large-scale projects to develop and produce military aircraft, helicopters, air defence equipment, armoured vehicles, and ammunition. We are also ready to discuss the possibility of jointly promoting these products in third countries," Mikheev said in a statement last year.

But certain issues persist with the Su-57, in terms of its assembly, and stealth capabilities. It may also be noted that so far, a little over 40 Su-57s have been built, with no confirmed international customer, compared to over 1,000 F-35s which have been inducted by many air forces around the world. With such a large market for the F-35, and its own proven record with the world's big air forces, India may look like the next big opportunity for Lockheed Martin. Moreover, in his recent phone call with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Donald Trump said India needs to buy more US-made arms and ammunition.

A primary issue, however, surrounding the transfer of F-35 technology to India is the US' strict policy on safeguarding sensitive military technology, meaning India would likely not be allowed to fully manufacture or significantly modify the aircraft domestically, hindering its 'Make in India' drive, and potentially raising concerns about operational sovereignty due to reliance on foreign components and updates.

The options to modernise

At the moment, India has two options to enhance air power – to select a foreign fifth-generation fighter, or to effectively pursue its own indigenous fifth-generation fighter aircraft project within a set deadline.

Analysts and IAF veterans have varied opinions, with some calling for focus on indigenous development, and others for collaborations, despite delays in the AMCA programme. There should be no stop-gap solution. India has a long-standing commitment to develop its own fifth-generation fighter, the AMCA, which will not only boost the domestic defence industry, but also make the country self-reliant and strong for its own security needs, they say.

Defence expert Air Marshal BK Pandey (Retd), says although there is a need to modernise, the local industry is unable to meet the IAF's requirement. Hence, foreign vendors may look at India as a potential market, which is nothing unusual. "If India likes a platform, an evaluation can be made before placing an order, but much depends on what the government decides... we are tied down to our local industry, and the government would like to boost that industry by placing orders with it, rather than go and spend money abroad," he says.

"If you are looking at India as a country doing something immediately, we have to go for a government-to-government deal like what we did for the Rafale, because if we go through the defence acquisition procedures, RFI RFP route... even if we were to sign a deal, the first aircraft will only start coming in the next three years onwards. It's not something that we can buy off the shelf, and boost our strength. Every country will try to put pressure on us to buy their aircraft, but it's a political decision for the government to make," CAPS Director General Golani says, calling for collaborations in engine and aircraft development.

The Global Firepower Index 2025 continues to rank India as the fourth-most powerful military in the world, with the IAF's formidable fleet strength at an impressive 2,229 aircraft, which include around 600 fighter jets, and there are constant upgrades of existing fleets, making them airworthy for the longest time. Last December, the Ministry of Defence also inked a Rs 13,500-crore contract with HAL for 12 Su-30 fighters, along with associated equipment for the IAF. Separately, a record over Rs 6.81 lakh crore was allocated in the Union Budget 2025-26 for the MoD, translating to an increase of 9.53% from the current fiscal, with a special emphasis on modernisation. All that's required now is taking to the sky and protecting it, within time!

WHAT GIVES A FIGHTER JET ITS STEALTH

1. **Low-observable design:** The aircraft's shape is carefully crafted with flat, angled surfaces that deflect radar waves away from the source, reducing the radar signal reflected back
2. **Radar-absorbent materials (RAM):** Special coatings applied to the aircraft's surface that absorb and scatter radar waves, further minimising the radar signature
3. **Internal weapons bay:** Weapons are stored inside the aircraft's fuselage instead of being carried externally on the wings or under-carriage, which reduces the radar cross-section
4. **Engine design:** Engine intakes and exhausts are designed to minimise the radar signature by directing air flow in a way that disperses radar waves
5. **Reduced infrared signature:** Measures like special engine cooling systems and exhaust treatments are used to minimise heat emissions, making it harder to detect with infrared sensors
6. **Low acoustic signature:** Design features that reduce noise generated by the aircraft, making it harder to detect with acoustic sensors
7. **Advanced avionics:** Sophisticated electronic systems that can manage radar signals, including low-probability-of-intercept (LPI) radar, to further minimise detection

VIBRANT BENGALURU

25 junctions revamped with fountains, lights, greenery

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

LED lights installed at Hudson Circle under the Brand Bengaluru initiative | EXPRESS

TO enhance the aesthetics and functionality of busy traffic intersections, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has developed 25 junctions in Bengaluru's central business district.

The project was flagged under the Brand Bengaluru concept a year ago. The upgraded junctions feature dry fountains, landscaped plantations, LED lighting, and other amenities to improve the overall experience of motorists and pedestrians. "The busy traffic junction in core areas add to stress among motorists, especially during peak hours. To address this, the BBMP developed these junctions with fountains, plantations, curbstones, swings at selected spots, and enhanced illumination to create a more pleasant atmosphere, particularly in the evenings," said a BBMP official. He added that the junction improvements were carried out under a grant of Rs 24 crore.

BBMP, Engineer-In-Chief BS Prahallad highlighted Hudson Circle as an example, where LED lights have been installed for the first time to enhance aesthetics. "The illumination, dry fountain and greenery offer a refreshing experience for motorists and serve as a visual delight," he said EIC.

The BBMP Central Project Division recently developed Race Course Road and Shivananada Circle. At Race Course Road, fancy benches have been installed for pedestrians and officegoers to relax during their lunch breaks.

"Apart from enhancing aesthetics, the aim was to ensure these junctions are better utilised and do not turn into black spots," the official added.

Power cut in parts of city today

Bengaluru: Residents of Nandini Layout will face a power outage on Sunday due to maintenance work by Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL). Power supply will be disrupted from 10 am to 1 pm in Krishnananda Nagar, RMC Yard, Marappana Palya, Yeshwanthpur Industrial Area, Telephone Exchange, Shankar Nagar, Sri Kanteshwar Nagar, Someshwara Nagar, Apma Yard, Mahalakshmi Layout, Ganesha Block, Anjaneya Temple Road, Saraswathipuram, AGB Layout, Dasanayakana Palya, GG Palya, YPR Industrial Area, JS Nagar, JC Nagar, Kurubarahalli, 60 Feet Road, 9th to 15th Main, JC Nagar, PWD, EWS, AMR Quarters, Rajkumar Samadhi Road, and surrounding areas.

Ulsoor Lake to get new lease of life soon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

Members of Ulsoor Lake Walkers' Fraternity with Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad

A GROUP of senior citizens from the Ulsoor Lake Walkers' Fraternity has been raising their voices against the lack of facilities and improper walkway on the eastern side of Ulsoor Lake. Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad, Executive Engineer of BBMP Lakes East Zone, Nitya, officials from the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) and others along with senior citizens walked through the lake's walkway to assess the situation of the lake on Saturday morning.

65-year-old Prithvi Pani, a retired businessman told TNSE, "The walkway is composed of uneven gravel with protruding stones, making it challenging and uncomfortable for senior citizens to walk, potentially leading to trips and falls. Additionally, during the rainy season, the path becomes muddy and slippery, making it even more difficult to walk. Moreover, the outer body fence and the water body grill fence are broken. The lake also lacks restrooms and a children's play area. Besides, the benches are damaged, making it impossible to sit or relax. These drawbacks are affecting the beauty of the lake," he said.

Members of the Ulsoor Lake Walker Fraternity said the consultant had created a master plan for the redevelopment of the lake. The plan includes a multi-level walkway to ease congestion, upgrades to the sedimentation pond, installation of a jet fountain with decorative lights, and the creation of an open yoga platform.

Earlier, the fraternity had met with the Chief Minister's political secretary and MLC Naseer Ahmed, who instructed BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath to take action. Following this, the government sanctioned funds for the development work. In the first phase, half of Ulsoor Lake will remain closed for construction work.

MLA Rizwan Arshad said he interacted with walkers, joggers and senior citizens to gather key insights. He also held discussions with the engineering team and said he is committed to kick-starting its overall redevelopment soon.

A youth was killed in a bullock cart race at the Antharaghatte Durgamba fair in Ajjampura taluk in Chikkamagluru. The youth has been identified as Ravi (40) from Gadihalli village. According to eyewitnesses, Ravi lost balance while driving the cart and fell down. The bullock carts coming behind him ran over him killing him on the spot. The Ajjampura police shifted the body to Ajjampura hospital for post-mortem

Two sentenced for promising 84% interest, cheating duo

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

A special court in the city sentenced two persons for allegedly cheating a couple after promising a high interest rate of 84% per year under a financial scheme.

The court sentenced Mohammed Idhrees to five years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 4 lakh, while the second accused, Mohammed Ameer Basha, to three years of rigorous imprisonment and Rs 3 lakh fine. They were held guilty for offences punishable under the provisions of IPC and the Karnataka Protection of Interest of Depositors in Financial Establishments (KPIDFE) Act, 2004.

Out of Rs 7 lakh fine, the court ordered Rs 6 lakh be paid as compensation to the victim, Yashaswini, and forfeited the remaining amount. The prosecution contended that Idhrees, convicted in four similar offences, is involved in nearly 10 such cases where cheating and defrauding allegations are levelled against him. He is also facing similar cases in Tamil Nadu. He was arrested in another case pending at Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu. Basha was also convicted in three cases for similar offences, the prosecution argued.

"On considering the aggravating and mitigating factors, it is noticed that the offence which is committed by the accused No.1 and 2 could be termed as a white collared offence, which bleeds the economy of the nation," said Judge Satish J Bali, 47th Additional City Civil and Sessions Judge and Special Judge for CBI Cases.

The accused were charge-sheeted by the CCB based on a complaint filed by the victims, Santhosh and Yashaswini, with the Pulikeshinagar police. Idhrees and Venkatachalam Ramachandram had floated a company, Fosterfin Capital Management, and promised an interest of 7% per month or 84% per year.

Santhosh and Yashaswini had invested Rs 5 lakh by transferring the amount to the account of Basha, in 2013. But the accused neither returned the principal amount nor interest. Venkatachalam and the firm were acquitted by the court.

FIR filed against conwoman Aishwarya

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A fresh FIR was registered against **Aishwarya Gowda**, who is facing allegations of defrauding crores of rupees and falsely claiming to be the sister of former MP DK Suresh. The complaint was filed by Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Byatarayanapura Sub-Division, Bharath S Reddy, at the Byatarayanapura police station on Wednesday. Reddy, the investigation officer in one of Aishwarya Gowda's cases registered at the Chandra layout police station, found that she had illegally obtained call detail records (CDRs) of four individuals to threaten and extort money.

The police stated that a case was registered under Section 120B (punishment for criminal conspiracy) and 409 (criminal breach of trust by a public servant) of the IPC, along with Section 72 of the IT Act and the Telecommunication Act. Following fraud cases registered against her, during investigation the ACP had seized five mobile phones belonging to Aishwarya Gowda and two from her husband. After obtaining court permission, the mobile phones were sent to the West Division CEN police station for data extraction. Upon examining the phones, investigators found the CDR details of four individuals. She also traced one victim and a complainant who had filed a case against her at the Rajajinagar police station over period of time, the police said.

The police further added that CDRs are confidential and can only be accessed by law enforcement or investigative agencies when required for criminal investigations. However, Aishwarya Gowda had no authorisation to obtain these records and had misused them to threaten and extort money with the help of a public servant. Following the FIR, the case was transferred to ACP Vijayanagar, and a notice was issued to Aishwarya Gowda for questioning.

SAY CHEESE!

A trio takes a selfie in front of Tejas fighter jet, after it was painted ahead of Aero India 2025 at Minsk Square in Bengaluru on Saturday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Fake cop attacks BWSSB worker

Bengaluru: A 35-year-old BWSSB contract worker was attacked and robbed by an unidentified robber who posed as a policeman. The victim from Malur in Channapatna was returning home in his car on Thursday evening after work. While near the Jayapura Gate on the service road of the Mysuru access controlled highway, the accused came on a bike and stopped the car under the pretext of checking the vehicle documents. When the victim opened the door to show the documents, the accused attacked him to ensure that he did not flee. After taking cash and a gold ornament from the victim, the accused fled. The victim is undergoing treatment in a hospital in Maddur for his fractured leg. The victim, HC Nagesh, was robbed between 7.30 pm and 7.40 pm. The police recorded his statements. "The accused was dressed in a police uniform. He reportedly kicked the right leg of the victim with his boots which are commonly worn by police. The victim was later taken in his car by the accused for some distance. The accused then drove back to the spot and left the victim and escaped on the bike," said an officer based on the victim's statements. The victim lost a gold finger ring and Rs 14000 in cash. The accused also threatened the victim with a knife, asking him to hand over all the valuables or he would be taken to the police station and put in the lockup.

CALLER PRIVACY

Now report emergencies to 112 helpline anonymously

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

INDIVIDUALS reporting emergencies via the Namma 112 helpline in Karnataka can choose to remain anonymous, according to the Bengaluru city police in response to a Right to Information (RTI) query filed by city-based RTI activist and NGO founder Dushyant Dubey.

Dubey filed the RTI on January 15, with RTI No. HMBUH/R/2025/80015, while the Bengaluru city police provided the clarification on February 7.

The police responded that callers have the option to keep their identity anonymous when making an 112 emergency call. To remain anonymous, callers must clearly state, "Please keep my data anonymous" or "I wish to stay anonymous" during the call. It is mandatory for 112 operators to protect the callers' privacy and mask details when anonymity is requested.

If anonymity is not maintained, the caller can escalate the issue during a feedback call after the complaint is closed. They can also provide a one-star rating and raise their concern with the feedback team. These reports are then taken up by the deputy commissioner of police (DCP) in charge of the Command Centre for necessary action.

The press release stated that this is a significant step toward ensuring that individuals feel safe and empowered to report emergencies without the fear of their identity being revealed. The ability to remain anonymous encourages more people to come forward and report incidents, ultimately contributing to public safety and security, it added.

WOMAN ARRESTED FOR KILLING HUSBAND OVER PROPERTY DISPUTE

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

A 50-year-old woman was arrested for killing her husband after he willed his property near Bidadi in his sister's name. The property, reportedly worth over Rs 3 crore at Hosur, is close to Bidadi Industrial Area.

The victim has been identified as C Cheluvaraju, while his wife Shantamma, 50, has been arrested.

The accused attacked her husband with a wooden log at 9.30 am on Thursday and later locked him in a cow shed. Cheluvaraju was inside the cow shed till 7.30 pm.

Her son returned from work in the evening and found his father in the cow shed. As there was no response from his father, the son immediately shifted him to a nearby private hospital where he was declared dead on arrival due to exhaustion and bleeding.

Suspecting foul play behind the death, the hospital, after registering a medicolegal case, reported the matter to the police. The police rushed to the hospital and questioned the suspects, who claimed that he died after falling inside the cow shed. The police checked the CCTV footage at the spot, where the accused was seen beating her husband and dragging him inside the cow shed.

The woman has been remanded in judicial custody and is lodged at the Mandya prison. The victim's children have not been arrested yet, as their role is yet to be established.

The couple reportedly had a strained relationship. The wife had also filed two complaints against her husband in the Bidadi police station which is under trial. Upset over the ill-treatment and police cases against him, the victim reportedly willed his property to his sister to take revenge against his wife.

The victim's sister, a resident of Agara near HSR Layout, filed a police complaint against Shantamma and her two children.

BANGALORE METRO RAIL CORPORATION LIMITED

PUBLIC NOTICE

Revised Fares of Namma Metro

Distance Zone (Kms.)	w.e.f 09/02/2025 (in Rs.)
0-2	10
2-4	20
4-6	30
6-8	40
8-10	50
10-15	60
15-20	70
20-25	80
25-30	90
>30	90
	Day Passes
Validity	Revised Fare (Rs.)
One Day	300
Three Days	600
Five Days	800

	Group Tickets	
Group Size	Discount (%) on applicable fare for entering the same station & exiting from same station all together	Flat fare per person for entering from different stations & exit at the same station OR enter from same stations & exit at different stations
	Revised	Revised
25 to 99	15	No Discount
100 to 1000	20	Rs 60/-
>1000	25	Rs. 50/-

Special provision for Smart Card users Only

For travel, the Minimum balance to be maintained in smart cards is Rs 90.

Peak Hours

- **5% discount for every journey made during Peak Hours.**

Non Peak Hours

- **An Additional 5% discount during Off-Peak hour based on the time of entry into the Metro System as below:**
- **From Start of Revenue Services up to 08.00 am.**
- **From 12 noon to 4.00 pm.**
- **From 9.00 pm till closing of revenue services.**

Sundays & National Holidays

- **10 % discount on all Sundays & National Holidays (January 26, August 15, October 02) uniformly throughout the day.**

BJP national general secretary B L Santhosh said that over the past decade, a certain section has been persistently trying to rake up issues related to the Constitution and Dr B R Ambedkar and trun them into a controversy

K'TAKA TO GET SECTOR-SPECIFIC INDUSTRIAL PARKS

GIM- Invest Karnataka, starting from Feb 12, aims to attract Rs 10 lakh crore investment across all sectors

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh is set to inaugurate the Global Investors Meet (GIM) 2025 – Invest Karnataka, which will be held from February 12 to 14 in Bengaluru, with inauguration scheduled for February 11, Large and Medium Industries Minister MB Patil said on Saturday.

The summit aims to attract Rs 10 lakh crore investments across all sectors.

As part of this, the State Government has also announced sector-specific industrial parks including a solar cell park and food park in Vijayapura, advanced pharma park in Kolar and a drone park in Chitradurga, EV clusters in Chikkaballapur and Dharwad, 200-acre startup park in Hubballi to support over 400 startups, and 1,200-acre industrial park in Tidagundi, Vijayapura.

Industries Minister MB Patil speaks to the media ahead of the Global Investors Meet, in Bengaluru on Saturday | ALLEN EGENUSE J

One of the key highlights of the event will be the launch of the Invest Karnataka Awards, which will recognise 14 industries that have significantly contributed to the state's industrial growth, Patil said, adding that these awards will include categories such as Sunrise Sector Awards, celebrating achievements in Aerospace and Defense, Auto/EV, and Biotech and Life Sciences, as well as awards for Highest One-Time Investment and Pioneers in Global Research and Development. "In addition to these, the government will introduce the first-ever SME Awards, which will honour over 35 small and medium enterprises. These awards will also include special recognitions for district-level excellence and women entrepreneurs," Patil added.

> **Global participation will be a major focus of Invest Karnataka 2025, with a lineup of over 75 speakers, including Dr Shashi Tharoor, Nikhil Kamath, and others**
>
> MB Patil, Large and Medium Industries Minister

The department will also launch AI-powered Single Window Clearance, with Congress MP Rahul Gandhi inaugurating the initiative, Patil said. "Global participation will be a major focus of Invest Karnataka 2025, with a lineup of over 75 speakers, including Dr Shashi Tharoor, Nikhil Kamath, and others. The summit will feature in-depth discussions on key topics such as renewable energy, university collaborations for KWIN and healthcare innovations," Patil added.

Power-packed week: Jets & jet-setting CEOs to take centre-stage

AS fighter jets and choppers roar over the Bengaluru skies displaying India's military might and technological prowess, the Siddaramaiah government will go on an overdrive to woo investors. Jets and jet-setting CEOs from across the world will take centre-stage at Aero India 2025 and the Global Investors Meet (GIM)- Invest Karnataka 2025 this week. Perhaps, for the first time, two major events of immense economic and strategic importance are being held simultaneously in Bengaluru.

From the investors' summit at Palace Grounds — around 16 km from Air Force Station Yelahanka, the airshow venue —the state is aiming to attract Rs 10 lakh crore worth of investments. While the government pitches Karnataka as the best investment destination in this part of the world, the event's success will boost its endeavours to spur economic activities and generate employment opportunities. It would help the government, which is accused of neglecting infrastructure development and focusing mostly on social welfare programmes, to strike a balance.

At the same time, the GIM's success will be a shot in the arm for the chief minister who will present his record 16th state budget next month. Over the last 10 years, industries in Karnataka grew at the rate of 9.3% and the government aims to achieve a 15-16 % annual rate of growth to reach the goal of $1 trillion GDP by 2032.

Forums like GIM will play a major role in that direction with the participation of representatives from 19 countries and top industrialists in India. The challenge ahead is to get them to sign Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and convert those commitments into actual investments. Equally important is to take them beyond Bengaluru to other parts of that state.

Conversion of MoUs to investment is a bigger test. In the 2012 GIM, MoUs, and Expressions of Interest (EoIs) for Rs 7.56 lakh crore were signed, and the rate of conversion was just around 27%. A decade later, after the 2022 GIM, that improved to around 40% to 50%. This time around, the government has set an ambitious target of 70% realization.

With its vast pool of talented workforce, educational and research institutions, thriving industrial ecosystem, cosmopolitan work culture, warm and welcoming nature of people, and excellent weather — notwithstanding the summers that are getting hotter every year — Bengaluru is the most sought-after investment destination in the country. According to some estimates, the tech city alone hosts over 50% of India's AI and Machine Learning professionals. It also hosts 400 of the Fortune 500 firms.

However, several states continue to pose a healthy competition to Karnataka. Taking steps to further increase the ease of doing business will enable Karnataka to maintain its edge over other states and compete at the global level. A new industrial policy that focuses on financial and non-financial incentives will also be unveiled during the investors' meet.

Spreading industries to lesser developed parts of the state will ensure equitable benefits from the investments and, at the same time, ease the burden on Bengaluru.

Despite consistent efforts by successive governments, Bengaluru's traffic remains a major concern. The city with a population of roughly 1.4 crore has 1.16 crore vehicles, placing a huge strain on urban infrastructure. Despite improvements in public transportation, the rapid rate at which the vehicle population is increasing will only make the situation grimmer with every passing year, unless we ease the burden on Bengaluru and develop other cities.

The government needs to emphasise its Beyond Bengaluru initiative to develop Tier II cities, where land is available for a much lower price. They are also well connected with airports, railways, and highways. It will be a win-win for industries as well as the state.

Also, the State Government needs to work in coordination with the Centre, especially Union Heavy Industries Minister and Minister of Steel HD Kumaraswamy, to develop industries in lesser-developed regions like Kalyan Karnataka. The state and central ministers must keep politics aside and avoid confrontation.

On the airshow front, the event will provide a platform for Indian defence and aerospace firms to explore business opportunities and collaboration. Bengaluru is the defence and aerospace hub in the country. It is home to state-owned aircraft maker Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and a number of Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) facilities and private firms.

The five-day show that takes off on Monday will also see the best of fighter jets, choppers, and transport aircraft from different countries trying to enthral spectators with their aerobatic manoeuvres, while global firms compete to win defence deals.

Be it the Global Investors Meet or the Aero India, ultimately business is what matters.

ALL IN FAMILY

Rahul Jarkiholi elected gen secy of state Youth Cong

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Belagavi

WITH three MLAs, an MLC and MP already in the family, the Jarkiholi family continues to add more of its members into active politics. Twenty-five-year-old **Rahul Jarkiholi**, son of PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi, has become the latest entrant into mainstream politics by taking up the mantle as a general secretary of the state Youth Congress. He won the office-bearers election by a huge margin of 1.20 lakh votes.

The Jarkiholi family was waiting for an opportunity to launch him in the Assembly election from one of the constituencies in Belagavi district. According to family sources, Rahul is certain to contest the 2028 Assembly polls from the district.

Priyanka Jarkiholi, daughter of Satish and elder sister of Rahul, won the Lok Sabha election from Chikkodi constituency last year. According to sources, Rahul may contest as a Congress candidate from Hukkeri Assembly segment, which is currently represented by BJP MLA Nikhil Katti, son of late Umesh Katti, a former minister.

An engineering graduate, Rahul actively campaigned for Priyanka in the Lok Sabha election and was instrumental in making her campaign a big success in Chikkodi.

Youths install Kempegowda statue, face off with police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

TENSION prevailed for some time on the Mysuru-T Narasipura Road near Lalith Mahal Palace on Saturday after a group installed a statue of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda without prior permission from the authorities, leading to a face-off with the officials and police.

According to the police, members of the Alanahalli Vokkaliga Yuvakara Sangha installed the 10-ft-plus bronze statue at the circle around 2 am on Saturday.

So the youths transported the statue and installed it in the wee hours of the morning. After coming to know about the incident, civic authorities along with the police rushed to the spot and tried to convince the youths to remove the statue. But the youths refused, which led to an exchange of words between them and the authorities. MLA K Harish Gowda rushed to the spot and promised to install the statue after obtaining permission from the MCC.

Meanwhile, police personnel were deployed at the spot to maintain law and order.

Delhi results wake-up call for K'taka Cong

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

THE emphatic victory of BJP in the Delhi Assembly polls is likely to have its impact on Karnataka politics and would help the party set its divided house in order. For state Congress, it is a wake-up call. The results sent out a message that welfare schemes, which AAP had made its trump card, especially the guarantees, will not work against anti-incumbency and alleged maladministration.

The victory should be a morale booster for BJP workers who were fed up with factionalism within the party. Now, different factions will be forced to follow high command's instructions. Though BJP state president BY Vijayendra has said the issue of state chief's post would be resolved by February 20, the high command will decide by February 15, sources said.

The central leadership is unlikely to make drastic changes in the party's state unit, including the president's post, as it had backfired when BS Yediyurappa was removed from the CM's post.

After the Delhi poll results, the tone and the tenor of dissidents and also 'neutral' leaders will likely to have a paradigm shift. Former CM DV Sadananda Gowda said that the Delhi poll results would work as a gag order to those who were airing their opinions publicly. "After the party's loss in Karnataka many took it for granted and aired their views publicly. Now after the party's back-to-back successes in Maharashtra, Haryana and Delhi, they will find it difficult to continue with their habit," he remarked. "Now, only the confirmation of Vijayendra's continuation as state president is left. The presidents of 23 organisational districts have been declared," said a former MLC and senior BJP spokesperson.

BJP leaders celebrate the victory of the party in the Delhi elections, at the party headquarters in Bengaluru on Saturday | ALLEN EGENUSE J

BJP win clear rejection of appeasement politics: HDK

Bengaluru : Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Saturday said that the historic victory of the BJP in the Delhi Assembly elections is a clear rejection of appeasement politics. "Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and BJP National President JP Nadda, the party has achieved an unprecedented victory in the Delhi Assembly elections. Heartfelt congratulations to all our allies and newly elected legislators," the JDS leader said. He stated that the results are a strong endorsement of PM Modi's vision for Viksit Bharat and Atmanirbhar Bharat while reaffirming support for development-driven governance over appeasement politics. The mandate reflects the people's unwavering trust in strong leadership, economic growth, and national security, he added.

The meeting planned by the rebel team of Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on the sidelines of the house warming ceremony of Union Minister of State for Railways V Somanna is unlikely to happen. Somanna clarified that there was no meeting on the cards. "I have invited 19 NDA MPs of the state for house warming," he said in Davanagere on Saturday. He denied speculation of him being an aspirant for the state president post.

Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara said Delhi election results will not affect other state elections. "In the Lok Sabha elections, other issues will be discussed and alliances will be formed. The assembly elections will be fought on local issues, and the alliance will not work out," he said when asked whether not forging an alliance affected both AAP and Congress.

It is a 'tight slap' to Kejriwal, says Joshi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hubballi

UNION Minister Pralhad Joshi on Saturday said the people of Delhi have rejected the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) outright for its negative politics and given a "tight slap" to AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal by giving a thumping majority to the BJP.

Speaking to the media here, he said Delhi voters have shown the door to those who are "anti-people, anti-development and indulged in corruption". They have supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi's honest and clean governance and true democracy. "After 27 years, the BJP is making a historic and unprecedented comeback in Delhi with a huge mandate," he added.

The Union minister added that voters have rejected the arrogance of Kejriwal and his attempt to create anarchy in the national capital and the political divisiveness of AAP. "Kejriwal, who came to power through Anna Hazare's anti-corruption movement, eventually himself got involved in corruption and ended up in jail. Now he is facing the consequences," Joshi said.

Ridiculing the performance of the Congress, Joshi said the party has been finished in Delhi as it has been completely rejected with a zero score under Rahul Gandhi's leadership. The party was nowhere to be seen except in two or three states. It has reached such a pitiable state in the country. "The Congress should not lose its existence as a national party. The party not winning a single seat is not a good sign. The party should introspect," he added.

On Raj Bhavan sending back the ordinance on regulating microfinance firms, Joshi said the governor's action should not be politicised, and the government should provide correct details in response to the questions raised. Moreover, the government should hold discussions with opposition parties, he said.

Delhi will be replicated in K'taka: BYV

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

ECSTATIC about the party's emphatic victory in the Delhi Assembly polls, BJP state president B Y Vijayendra on Saturday predicted that the same will be reflected in Karnataka as well in the next Assembly polls.

In a post on X, he said, "Delhi results have shown that BJP cannot be defeated by fighting with the party's ideology and achieving victory by spreading false propaganda against it will be temporary. This will be reflected in Karnataka in the future. It is the hope of every party leader and worker who worked hard for the Delhi elections that the new government, under the guidance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji, will work resolutely to fulfil the aspirations of the people of Delhi, who have handed over the reins of governance to the BJP. This election is a historic victory for the BJP workers and the people of Delhi (sic)."

The people of Delhi have sent a message of strength to the leadership of Prime Minister Modi by making the BJP win, he said.

"I would like to express my gratitude to the voters of Delhi for giving the BJP a record victory and congratulate Modi on behalf of the people of Karnataka. The victory in the national capital has given immense strength to the PM, who is planning to strengthen the country on a global scale with the resolve of a developed India. The Bharatiya Janata Party, under the leadership of national president J P Nadda and Home Minister Amit Shah, has achieved an emphatic victory. The BJP is a party that has set a world record with millions of patriotic and nation-building workers," he said.

Set up K'taka's 2nd national law varsity in M'luru: Moily

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

FORMER chief minister M Veerappa Moily emphasised the need for establishing a second National Law University in Karnataka at Mangaluru. Moily urged CM Siddaramaiah to announce it in the upcoming budget. In a letter to Siddaramaiah, Moily said that he had initiated the measures to establish the first-ever National Law School of India University, NLSIU, in Bengaluru. It proved to be the most successful experiment and today there are 27 National Law Universities in India, he said.

The former CM said some states have established more than one National Law Universities in their respective states. "The objective of establishing a second NLU in Mangaluru is to protect the interest of students from Karnataka by providing 50% reservation and make this NLU focus on areas like technology and law; maritime laws; cyber security; AI and the like. The establishment requires an independent statute with a broader theme (National University of Law and Public Policy) to enable the institution to incorporate innovative courses in Law, management, technology, medicine, and public policy," he said.

If all the formalities can be completed in FY 2025-26, setting up the second law school university in Mangaluru will be a reality for FY 2026-27, Moily added.

HISTORIC BUDGET

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah holds a pre-budget meeting with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and department officials at his official residence in Bengaluru on Saturday | EXPRESS

EXPRESS READ

Farmers' forum to protest against microfin firms on Feb 13

Mysuru: Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene state secretary Manjukiran expressed displeasure against the governor for sending back the state government's ordinance that aimed to regulate microfinance firms. Speaking to reporters on Saturday, Manjukiran said the state government promulgated the ordinance to curb harassment by microfinance firms. "But the governor returning the microfinance ordinance is unfair and inappropriate. The governor's action is suspected to favour microfinance firm and against working class people. Therefore, on February 13, a protest will be organised in Siddaligapura and Nanjagud against microfinance firms," he said. ENS

Odisha government has decided to implement the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for its employees, who are considered eligible for pension under the National Pension System (NPS). The decision was taken at the state cabinet chaired by CM Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday

FIR AGAINST RAHUL IN ODISHA FOR 'ANTI-NATIONAL STATEMENTS'

Has crossed the limits of freedom of speech, says BJP in its complaint

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Jharsuguda

JHARSUGUDA police on Friday registered an FIR against Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** over allegations of making anti-national statements. The action was taken basing on the complaint of the district unit of the BJP.

As per sources, on February 5, members of the Jharsuguda BJP including BJP Yuva Morcha, RSS, Bajrang Dal and Legal Cell submitted a written complaint to IG, Northern Range, Himanshu Lal alleging that Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi was deliberately making anti-national statements thereby hurting the sentiments of Indian citizens.

"The statement of Rahul Gandhi has crossed the limits of freedom of speech. By declaring his fight against Indian state itself, he has consciously incited subversive activities and rebellion among the populace. The activities have undermined the sovereignty and integrity of India," the complaint had stated.

Responding to the complaint, IG, Himanshu Kumar Lal instructed SP Jharsuguda, Smit P Parmar to investigate the matter thoroughly. Subsequently on Friday, an FIR was registered against Rahul under sections 152 and 197(1)(d) of the BNS and investigation undertaken.

Meanwhile asked about it, Congress leader in Jharsuguda Amita Biswal alleged the ruling party was wrongfully framing Rahul and misleading the public. "Rahul Gandhi has always acted as a constructive Opposition be it questioning BJP's nexus with the capitalists or commenting on the viability of its policies and nature of foreign relations. He has never made any remarks which could attack the statute of the country. All the allegations raised by the BJP are baseless and we will also launch a protest against this political vendetta against our leader," she said.

Gandhi has been booked under sections that specifically target acts jeopardising India's sovereignty, unity and integrity. These sections also cover the creation or dissemination of false or misleading information that threatens the country's core interests and security.

PRIYANKA: PEOPLE OF DELHI VOTED FOR CHANGE

Kalpetta (Wayanad): The people of Delhi have voted for change, Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said on Saturday. She said that it was clear even during Congress meetings held before the election that the people were dissatisfied and wanted change. Priyanka, who arrived in Wayanad on Saturday, is on a three-day visit to her constituency to participate in party meetings. She attended meetings in the Mananthavady, Sulthan Bathery and Kalpetta segments, where she thanked booth leaders for helping her register a resounding victory in the Wayanad bypoll. "Wayanad election was a different experience for me, who had campaigned for my mother and brother for 35 years. The entire poll process was taken up by booth leaders and workers. Although I was apprehensive at first, the election process in Kerala was different as Rahul had told me. This model should be emulated in all states," she said. **ENS**

DMK wins big in Erode East bypoll

DMK supporters celebrate the party's win in the Erode East Assembly bypoll at Chithode in Erode on Saturday | S SENBAGAPANDIYAN

P SRINIVASAN @ Erode

THE ruling DMK continued its electoral winning streak by emerging victorious in the Erode East by-election on Saturday by getting 1,15,709 votes, which was 74.7% of the total votes polled. DMK's V C Chandhirakumar trounced Naam Tamilar Katchi's M K Seethalakshmi by a margin of 91,558 votes. The NTK candidate, who had polled 24,151 votes, forfeited her deposit.

Since all the major political parties including the AIADMK, BJP, PMK and the DMDK had boycotted the bypoll, the by-election was seen as a direct contest between DMK's Dravidian politics and NTK's Tamil nationalist outreach. About 44 candidates including Independents were in the fray. NOTA (None of the Above) grabbed third place with 6,109 votes.

Speaking to reporters after the counting, Chandhirakumar dedicated the victory to Chief Minister M K Stalin. "People have reposed faith in the DMK, the CM and deputy CM (Udhayanidhi Stalin)," he said.

Polling for the election was held on Wednesday and the votes were counted on Saturday at the Government Engineering College near Chithode in Erode district.

Counting began at 8 am. Chandhirakumar led the contest from the beginning, polling 197 of 251 votes cast via postal ballots. He was followed by NTK candidate M K Seethalakshmi with 13 votes. At the end of the first round of EVM vote count, Chandhirakumar got 7,837 votes, followed by Seethalakshmi with 1,081 votes. The DMK candidate maintained this lead till the end of round 20, winning the by-election with 1,15,709 (74.7%) votes. Seethalakshmi secured 24,151 votes (15.59%).

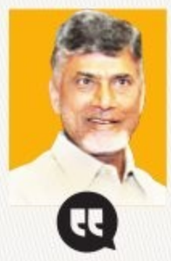
Chandhirakumar had earlier won from the seat in the 2011 Assembly election on behalf of the DMDK.

AAP's governance model a failure: Naidu

S VISWANATH @ Vijayawada

Following the BJP's historic win in Delhi Assembly elections, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister **N Chandrababu Naidu** remarked that the victory is a testament to the people's trust in PM Narendra Modi's leadership.

Speaking to the media at his residence in Undavalli on Saturday, Naidu stated that the people of the national capital had chosen the right party (referring to the BJP) at the right time. He expressed that voting for the 'wrong' party could seriously undermine the public's future. He described the BJP's victory in Delhi as a victory for the people. He further remarked that the governance model in Delhi had been a failure and could not continue any longer. "I am not criticising individuals. There are piles of garbage on the main roads of Delhi, and the city has become heavily polluted. Delhi is now one of the most polluted places," he added.



I appreciate PM for providing stable governance. I am confident India will progress in all sectors

Chandrababu Naidu

Naidu emphasised that governments should implement people-centric policies, not those designed for political and financial gain. He stated that the people of both Andhra Pradesh and Delhi had rejected the policies of the YSRCP and AAP, respectively, and removed them from power. Naidu reiterated that welfare and development should go hand in hand to improve living standards. "I wholeheartedly appreciate Modi for providing stable governance. I am confident that the country will progress in all sectors," he said.

The Chief Minister noted that, in the past, many people migrated to Delhi in search of a better life. However, he pointed out that now, the fear of pollution and the political climate in the national capital deter people from migrating.

Process, SoPs to be shared with edu institutions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The newly proposed frameworks will be backed by use of advanced IT-based features to infuse objectivity in assessment and eliminate any unfair practices, NAAC has said. For those HEIs who have already submitted their applications for accreditation (Cycle 1) or for upgrading their accreditation rankings (Cycle 2 or above), the NAAC EC has decided the following: HEIs in Cycle 1 will be given an option to opt for basic accreditation, and their previously paid fees, if any, may be adjusted against their future application. It has decided to allow HEIs in Cycle 2 and above to retain the validity of their present grade until the Basic accreditation and MBGL are launched.

They may then choose either of the two (Basic or MBGL) based on their preparedness. If any of the HEIs in the above two categories still wish to proceed with assessment as per the existing RAF, the peer team assessment will be carried out through an online mode for colleges and hybrid mode (with online and physical) mode for universities. Detailed process and SoPs for online and Hybrid visits will be shared with HEIs.

NAAC inspection committee chairman Samarendra Nath Saha (V-C, Ramchandra Chandravansi University) and members Rajeev Sijariya (Jawaharlal Nehru University), Gayathri Devaraja (Davangere University) M Hanumanthappa (Bangalore University) and Guntur's Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation (KLEF) office bearers were among ten arrested by the CBI in the alleged bribery case.

FINGER POINTING PROTEST

Congress workers during a 'Finger Pointing Protest' against the Pinarayi Vijayan government in Kerala, in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday | VINCENT PULICKAL

Cop protests at stn with dad's body

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Belagavi

A large number of people led by police inspector Ashok Sadalgi of Devadurga police station staged a protest in front of the police station at Harugeri in Belagavi district on Friday evening, alleging that his father died after Harugeri police sub-inspector Mallappa Pujari assaulted him.

The protesters placed the body of Annappa Sadalgi, Ashok's father, in front of the station and demanded that an FIR be filed against those who had allegedly assaulted Annappa. According to sources, a group of people entered Annappa Sadalgi's land near Harugeri on January 10. When Annappa confronted the group, he was allegedly beaten up. After the incident, Annappa and those who had allegedly assaulted him were taken to the police station at Harugeri.

The sources claimed that while in custody, Annappa was allegedly assaulted by police personnel. Later in the evening, his health deteriorated and he was admitted to a private hospital by his son.

Ashok reportedly requested Harugeri police and the deputy superintendent of police of Athani to register an FIR against those who had allegedly attacked his father. It is alleged that his request was ignored. Pujari filed an atrocity case against Ashok's brother.

Belagavi SP Bhimashankar Guled denied the allegation against Pujari. He said while Annappa was brought to Harugeri police station on January 10, there was no evidence of an attack on him. The CCTV footage and other evidence revealed no assault on Annappa while he was in police station. Guled said Annappa underwent a heart procedure in 2017, and was admitted to a hospital in Belagavi with complaints of breathlessness. He passed away while undergoing treatment in the hospital. The police are waiting for postmortem report to know the reasons for Annappa's death.

EXPRESS READ

Two youths drown in B'ghatta temple tank

Bengaluru: Two BSc students, both aged 20, drowned in Suvarnamukhi Kalyani inside Bannerghatta National Park at 5 pm on Saturday. The deceased are Deepu and Yogishwaran, both residents of Garvebhavipalya. The body of Deepu has been fished out. Due to bad light, search for Yogishwaran's body was stopped and will resume on Sunday. The two along with three others, had come to Bannerghatta Park and had entered the kalyani for a swim

Elephant kills woman worker in coffee estate

Chikkamagaluru: A woman labourer was killed by a wild elephant in an estate in Tanigebail Forest range in Tarikere section of N R Pura taluk on Saturday. The deceased Vinoda Bai (55) was attacked by the elephant when she was working in the coffee estate. She hailed from Harapanahalli in Vijaynagar district and was residing in the estate with her family. MLA TD Raje Gowda distributed a cheque of `15 lakh to the family of the deceased

Temperature in Munnar dips to minus 1°C

Idukki: Wooing the holiday makers, the mercury in Kerala's Munnar has plunged to the season's lowest at -1°C on Friday. As per the data of the United Planters Association of Southern India, the lowest minimum temperature of -1°C was recorded at the Chundavurrai estate in Munnar. Meanwhile, other areas such as Silent Valley recorded 2°C, Devikulam 1°C, Lechmi 2°C, Sevenmalai 3°C, Madupatty 7°C and Nullathanni 3°C

ISRO completes ignition trial of indigenous cryogenic engine

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

ISRO on Saturday said that it had completed the ignition trial of the indigenous CE20 cryogenic engine powering the upper stage of the Launch Vehicle Mark (LVM)-3. The trial was completed on February 7 in the High Altitude Test Facility at ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu. The trials were done with the multi-element igniter under vacuum conditions, which simulated the engine ignition in the vacuum condition of space.

"During the test, the engine's ignition thrust chamber was carried out with a multi-element igniter in vacuum, under the tank pressure conditions that are expected to prevail at the time of restarting the cryogenic engine in flight. The performance of the engine and the facility during the test was normal and as expected," ISRO said.

Scientists said as restarting a cryogenic engine is complex and as part of the studies related to the restart operation, ISRO is exploring the initiation of turbopumps in bootstrap mode rather than the stored gas system. In this approach, both the thrust chamber and gas generator are expected to re-ignite under tank head conditions. ISRO has outlined a series of tests aimed at engine starts in bootstrap mode towards enhancing the capability for multiple cryogenic engine restarts during flight.

Previously, the engine ignition trial using multi-element igniter was carried out under ground conditions outside the vacuum chamber. The engine is already qualified to operate for thrust levels ranging from 19t to 22t in flight with single start and is qualified for Gaganyaan mission.

Commuters slam Metro fare increase

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SANJEEV Dyamannavar, mobility expert, said, "People travelling in groups (more than two) may now use their cars or take cabs as their total fare in Metro will either cost the same or even less." He criticised the government for providing free bus facility for women and at the same time increasing Metro fares.

Expressing their anger, several commuters termed Namma Metro the most expensive metro service in India.

Megha, an IT professional, who commutes daily from Yeshwanthpur to Baiyappanahalli, said, "The fare revision committee, instead of encouraging public transport, seems to have worked hard to make Namma Metro less relevant in the future. While a fare hike was anticipated, this increase is too high and simply unaffordable for the common man," she said.

"What can the common man do? We will stop using Metro. Let the state government bear the burden of more debt repayment," said Ashish from a corporate firm. The only way now is to use BMTC buses, he added.

Bengaluru Central MP PC Mohan criticised BMRCL for the fare hike. He termed it an unfair burden on commuters. This will push more people towards private vehicles, increasing congestion. "Public transport must be affordable," he said.

Karnataka's bridge-cum-barrage across Tungabhadra flayed by TDP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kurnool

TELUGU Desam Party (TDP) Kurnool district unit president P Thikka Reddy opposed Karnataka's proposal to construct a bridge-cum-barrage on the Tungabhadra River, warning that it would disrupt water flow to Kurnool district and affect farmers.

Addressing the media at the party office on Saturday, Thikka, along with Kurnool Urban Development Authority chairman Somisetty Venkateswarlu and other leaders, criticised the project's potential impact. He stated that Karnataka planned to build a barrage with a capacity of 0.35 TMC between Kuntalanuru in Kurnool district and Chilakalapervi, along with another one between Minnalayam and Chinna Manchala. These structures, he warned, would threaten irrigation in Mantralayam, Yemmiganur, and Kodumur assembly segments.

Thikka dismissed Karnataka engineers' claims that groundwater levels would remain unaffected, calling such assurances unreliable. He alleged that the project could facilitate the illegal diversion of Tungabhadra water through lift irrigation, depriving local farmers of irrigation resources. He also raised concerns that the historic Ramalingeswara Swamy temple road could be submerged due to the construction.

VTU CONVOCATION

Farmer's daughter shines, aims to join civil service

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Belagavi

Shwetha HU, a MBA student from Sai Vidya Institute of Technology (SVIT) Bengaluru, and native of Sringeri has brought happiness among Shringeri's people by winning the highest number of gold medals at the Part 2 of the 24th Annual Convocation of the Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi.

The guests presented her with four gold medals and certificates during the convocation ceremony at VTU campus in Belagavi on Saturday. After receiving the certificate she said, "I give credit of my achievement to my parents and lecturers. I completed my higher education taking an education loan and scholarship, and now I have plans to crack the KAS examination to serve in the administrative services," Shwetha, daughter of a farmer, said.

Rachana R, MCA student from Bangalore Institute of Technology (BIT) who bagged three medals showed gratitude towards her mother. She said that she completed her higher education with a scholarship, and now wants to attempt UPSC.

Sai Meghana, VTU student, native of Itakota, Andhra, presently staying in Belagavi, bagged a gold medal in MTech in 'Very Large Scale Integrated (VLSI) and embedded system'. She faced financial crisis, and had to mostly depend on educational loans and scholarships to complete her studies. Meghana's father runs tuition classes, and her mother is a housewife. Presently working in VTU, she aims to do research work and then attempt the civil services examination.

Anvita M. Kumar, M.E. Structural Engineering student from SJBIT, Bengaluru, Yashas L, M. Tech. in Mechanical Engineering SJCIT, Chikkaballapur, Supriya P Rajput, MTech. in Electronics and Communication Engineering, KLS VDRIT, Haliyal bagged two gold medals each. Bangalore Institute of Technology (BIT), Bengaluru has bagged highest seven VTU ranks, while VTU Constituent college UBDTCE, Davanagere bagged five ranks, R N S Institute of Technology, Bengaluru, JNNCE, Shivamogga bagged four ranks each.

UJVN LTD.

H.O.: 'UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephone: 0135 - 2763808, Fax 0135-2763508
CIN No. : U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website : www.ujvnl.com

Letter No.92 **Short term e-Tender Notice** Dated 07.02.2025

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil), MB-II, Chinyalisaur (Uttarkashi) invites online bid from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

Tender No: 40/ EE(Civil) / MB-II / Chinyalisaur / 2024-25
Name of work:"Inspection of the Head Race Tunnel of MB-II Project by ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) in the water filled condition at Distt-Uttarkashi."
Estimated Cost : Rs. 2,24,41,310.00(excluding GST)
Date of availability of bid document on website : 07.02.2025 from 5:00PM
Last date for submission of bid on website: 22.02.2025 upto05:00PM
For fuller & further details, kindly visit "e-procurement portal http://uktenders.gov.in"

Executive Engineer (Civil),MB-II, Chinyalisaur

"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that our Client **Mr. Ashokaaditya G S.** designated partner Infonity Asociates, is intending to Jointly Develop the property as mentioned in the Schedule hereunder along with its owner **Mrs. Suman Subash Sodeshi.**

If anybody having any objections, claim, interest, dispute for the above joint development, he/she may contact the undersigned with the documentary proof substantiating his/her/their objections/claims/details of disputes within Seven (7) days from the date of this publication, failing which, my client will proceed with the Joint Development project with the above owner as if there are no third party claims/objections/disputes in respect of the Schedule Property and thereafter no claims/objections/disputes will be entertained.

SCHEDULE 'A' PROPERTY

All that pieces and parcels of the immovable properties being all that pieces and parcels of the converted Undevoloped lands bearing Survey Nos. 92/2 and 92/9 are situated at Sonnur Village, Lakkur Hobli, Bangalore Malur Taluk, Bangalore, admeasuring in an area in the aggregate to about 2 acres and 07 guntas. **East by:** Property belongs to C. Muniyappa & Channappa Sy,no.92/7 **West by:** Property belongs Kunta Sonnappa And Venkaramanappa Sy. No.104 **North by:** Road **South by:** Property belongs to Sampaiah Sy.no.92/3

SCHEDULE (description of the properties)

Item No.1: All that piece and parcel of the immovable property located at Survey number 92/2 Extent Total 1 Acre 17 Guntas, having been converted from Agriculture to Residential Purpose in the office of the District Commissioner, Kolar District Vide No. A.L.N.S.R. 108/2015-16, Dated 17.08.2016, Situated at Sonnur Village, Lakkur Hobli, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, bounded on: **East by:** Property belongs to C. Muniyappa & Channappa. **West by:** Property belongs Venkaramanappa to Kunta Sonnappa **North by:** Rajappa's Property & Land in Sy No 92/1 **South by:** Sampaiah's Property

Item No.2: All that piece and parcel of the immovable property located at Old Survey number 92/1 New number 92/9 Extent Total o Acre 30 Guntas, having been converted from Agriculture to Residential Purpose in the office of the District Commissioner, Kolar District Vide No. A.L.N.S.R. 108/2015-16, Dated 17.08.2016, Situated at Sonnur Village, Lakkur Hobli, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, bounded on: **East by:** Property belongs to Rajappa. **West by:** Property belongs to Sonnappa. **North by:** Siddanahalli (Rural) Road. **South by:** Beerappa's Property now belongs to B. Venkateshappa @ B.Venkateshappa, at Present M.Bhupal Reddy.

V. J. Narayan Kumar,
NK Law Associates, Advocates,
#12, Block I, Diamond District Apartments, Old Airport Road, Kodihalli, Bangalore-560008. Ph No. 08041477688, 9845077688. **vjnk@nklaws.com.**

NOTICE

With effect from 10th May 2025 all business activities of our **MSME Hassan Branch** (1st Floor, OBP Building, Opposite Brahmins Hostel, Salagame Road, Hassan, Pincode: 573201, Hassan District, Karnataka. Ph: 9606792284 / 9345960622) will be shifted to our Hassan New Branch **(MIG 1671, Ground Floor, Sarthaka Nilaya, 79 Cross, Near New Court, Channapatna Housing Board, Hassan – 573201, Hassan District, Karnataka. Ph: 9606792284 / 9345960622)** for our operational convenience. Customers may kindly note the change and are requested to approach us at the above-mentioned address only for all further transactions and requirements after the said date.

Call: 9606792284 / 9345960622

ASIRVAD MICRO FINANCE LTD.
(Subsidiary of Manappuram Finance Limited)
Registered Office: No: 9, 9th Floor, Club House Road, Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002. Tamilnadu, India

NOTICE

With effect from 10 th May 2025 all business activities of our **MSME Tiptur Branch** (Building No. 416-1, Rama Mandir Road, Opp. Balaji Hospital, B.H. Road, Tiptur, Pin - 572201, Tumkur District, Karnataka. Ph: 9743409370 / 9345960622) will be shifted to our Tiptur New Branch **(K R Extension, Near Mudra Hospitals, Girls School Backside, Tiptur – 577527, Tumkur District, Karnataka) Ph: 9743409370 / 9345960622)** for our operational convenience. Customers may kindly note the change and are requested to approach us at the above-mentioned address only for all further transactions and requirements after the said date.

Call: 9743409370 / 9345960622

ASIRVAD MICRO FINANCE LTD.
(Subsidiary of Manappuram Finance Limited)
Registered Office: No: 9, 9th Floor, Club House Road, Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002. Tamilnadu, India

NOTICE

With effect from 10 th May 2025 all business activities of our **MSME Kollegala Branch** (Door No: 9/ 154, 1st Floor, Modi Mansion, Marigudi Street, Kollegal - 571440, Chamrajanagara District, Karnataka. Ph: 8095707142 / 9345960622) will be shifted to our Kollegala New Branch **(Shiva guru Complex 1 st Floor, Opposite Gurukula Vidya Kendra, Near Janani Hospital, Basaveshwara Nagara Industrial Area, Kollegala – 571442, Chamrajanagara District, Karnataka. Ph: 8095707142 / 9345960622)** for our operational convenience. Customers may kindly note the change and are requested to approach us at the above mentioned address only for all further transactions and requirements after the said date.

Call: 8095707142 / 9345960622

ASIRVAD MICRO FINANCE LTD.
(Subsidiary of Manappuram Finance Limited)
Registered Office: No: 9, 9th Floor, Club House Road, Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002. Tamilnadu, India

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that my Client **Mr. Thriyaganadhan** S/O Kariyan, R/at Old Barr Line, Lakshar Mohalla, Shimoga-577202. C/o Thyagaraju S/o Govindappa, Muthagatti Road, Anekal Town, Bangalore - 562106 has Lost his Original Registered Document **No. 8105/1986, dated: 21-10-1986** Registered in the Office of Kelamangalam Sub Registrar Office, Sy. No. 663/2, Site No. 98, measuring 1200 Sq.Ft situated at Kothagondapalli Village, Hosur Taluk, Krishnagiri District, Tamilnadu State.

In this regard My Client has also preferred a Police Complaint On 07-02-2025 before the Inspector of Police, Anekal Police Station, and the Police taken Complaint on File on C.Miss No. 61/2025, (Petition No.279/1330/2025) on dated 07-02-2025 that my Client has not created my charge over the Property covered under the above said document. If found the Document may kindly be delivered to the under mentioned address, any objection from the concerned Public will not be entertained or bind my Client after from 7 days of this Public Notice.

M. Manjunath-Advocate
Anekal-562106

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client intends to purchase the property described in the schedule herein from of Smt. C.N. RUPA, W/o. Sri. B.S. Lokesh, Aged about 44 Years, Residing at No.365, 7th Main, 6th Cross, R.P.C Layout, Vijayanagar, Bangalore-560040, who is the absolute owner of the schedule property and same is her self-acquired property.

Any person or persons other than the owners/vendors named above having any claim or interest in or to the said property, or any part thereof in any manner is/are required to forward their claim on or to the property to the undersigned at their office along with the relevant documents thereof, within **Seven (7) days** from the date of publication of this notice. In the absence of any claims within the above said period it shall be deemed that there are no such claims or that if there are any claims and they have not been made it shall be deemed to have been waived and the conveyance will be executed in our client's favour without any further reference in this regard.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Vacant Site No.44, formed out of Sy. No. Old 107, New No.107/14, situated at Mallathahalli Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, converted Vide No. B.DIS.ALN.SR.(N)89/84-85, dated 8/10/1985 and No. B.DIS.ALN.SR(N)90/85-86, dated 17-01-1989 and Corrigendum No. ALN.CR(N)25/92-93, dated 06-08-1993, by Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore, Old property bearing No. 2333/107/1A/44, now BBMP has assigned E-Khata (Form B) vide PID No. 8842493862, situated at Mallathahalli Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Ward No. 129-Jananabharathi, Bangalore North Taluk, East to West 30 feet and North to South 40 feet, totally measuring 1200 Sq ft bounded on **East By:** Site No.45, **West by:** Site No.43, **North by:** Private Property, **South by:** Road.

M.K. Shivaram, Advocate
No. 138, 2ndMain Road, Ground Floor, Sheshadripuram, Bangalore-560020.
mk.shivaram@gmail.com
Phone: 9448044583. Dated: 06-02-2025.

PUBLIC NOTICE

To the General public at large, we hereby notify that, **Sri. A.M Shivaraju** S/o late Malle Gowda are the sole and absolute owners of Survey no 98 Hissa No.2 (Agricultural land) : as mentioned in schedule below. Now Owner are intending to Sell the schedule Agricultural land in favour of Sri. N.R. Sridhar & Others. If any person/s having any objections or claims may send their objections, with all supporting Documents to the undersigned within a period of 15 days from the date of this publication. Failing which it shall be presumed that there are no claims whatsoever and/or daims, if any, shall be deemed to be waived.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the Survey No.98 Hissa no 2. Situated at Ramanagar District, Harohalli Taluk, Maralavadi Hobli, Yelchawadi Village. Totally Measuring 1 Acear 12 Gunta. Bounded on East : Government Road. West : Rajanna (Ainore) land, North : Sy no 98, Hissa no 1, South : Government land.

CONTACT :
Sridhar & Others
Bangalore - 560 061.
Mobile : **8792821729.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients **Sri. VIDYARANYA,** S/o. K. Rabindranath, aged about 57 years and **Smt. PAVITRA VIDYARANYA,** W/o. Vidyaranya, aged about 52 years, both residing at No.B-28, Kudermukh Colony, Koramangala 2nd Block, Bengaluru - 560034 23/6, are the absolute and joint owners and in joint peaceful possession and enjoyment of the Schedule Property herein.

The Public are hereby informed that the Original Sale Dee dated 06/10/1997, registered as Document No. 5800/1997-98, Book-1, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar Bengaluru South Taluk, executed by Sri. Muniyappa Mudaliar and Others represented by their Power of Attorney Holder Sri. Austin Roach in favour of my Clients, in respect of the Schedule Property was in my Clients custody and the same has been lost / misplaced.

My Clients friend Sri. J. Shanmuganathan, under the instructions of my Clients has also lodged a Police Complaint / Lost Article Report before the jurisdictional police on 07/02/2025 and the same is registered as Lost Report No. 1467137/2025.

The public are hereby requested to notify me / my Clients and handover the aforesaid Original Sale Deed dated 06/10/1997, registered as Document No. 5800/1997-98, Book-1, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar Bengaluru South Taluk; to me / my Clients, if found.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing residential Site bearing No.39, bearing old V.P. Khata No.1127, totally measuring 4568 Square Feet, in a Layout known as Lake Shore Homes, carved out of Sy.No.30/3, 30/4 & 30/5, situated at Kasavanahalli Village, Varthur Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk (erstwhile Bengaluru South Taluk), converted for non agricultural residential purpose vide Official Memorandum bearing No. B.DIS.ALN.SR(S) 344/1992-93, dated 08/03/1993 passed by the Special Deputy Commissioner, Bengaluru District, bounded on:

East by : Site No.53, **West by** : Private Property, **North by** : Private Road, **South by** : Site No.40.

MAHESH REDDY G, Advocate
No.27, Indo Legal Inc, 9th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bengaluru - 560027.
Mobile: 9035323514, 8618853779
Email : maheshradvocate@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that our client intends to purchase the property described in the Schedule hereunder ("***Schedule Property***") and it has been represented to our client that the Schedule Property is owned by (1) Smt Sharadamma, wife of Late Sri Sugnanachar, (2) Sri Nagarajachar, son of Late Sri Sugnanachar and (3) Sri Murali Achar, son of Late Sri Sugnanachar. Our client intends to purchase the Schedule Property from the aforesaid owners, based on the representation that the aforesaid persons are the sole and absolute owners with uninhibited rights of alienation over the same.

Any person claiming to have any manner of right, title, claim or interest in the Schedule Property is hereby called upon to notify the undersigned with supporting documents thereof within Fourteen (14) days from the date of this notice, after which period, our client shall proceed with the purchase thereof on the basis that there are no claims of whatsoever nature with regard to the Schedule Property or any part thereof nor any objections for sale thereof by the said persons to our client.

SCHEDULE

(Description of the Schedule Property)

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Sy. No. 23/13, Khatha No. 51, situated at Kadaganahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk, Bangalore, totally measuring 4 Acres and bounded as follows:

East by : Remaining portion of Sy. No. 23;
West by : Road;
North by : Road;
South by : Private property.

Bengaluru
Sd./- February 09, 2025

Jacob Alexander, Partner
R&A Partners
No. 105, 1st Floor,Barton Centre,
No. 84, M.G. Road, Bangalore-560001.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby notified that, my client, **A2G BUILDERS** Represent by it's Proprietor: Smt. AMBIKA.A. W/o Amrut, R/at, No-19/20. 7th Cross, Vignana Nagar, Bangaore-560075. had intended to purchase the below mentioned Schedule property from 1. Mr. CHANDRASHEKAR B.G, aged about 38 years, S/o Mr. Gangadharappa.B.G. R/at No.104, Ramya Regency, Jeevan Bheema Nagar, Bangalore-560017.AADHAAR No. 8262 2791 1536, 2. Mr. N. SRINIVASULU, aged about 48 years, S/o Mr.Narayana, R/at No.203, Sai Anjanadri Residency, 8A Cross, Abbaiah Reddy Layout, Kaggadasapura, Bangalore-560073, AADHAAR No.4945 6463 8343, being its lawful owners through the registered sale deed dated. 09.02.2024 and Numbered as BNS-1-22085-2023-24 in the office of the Sub Registrar Banasawadi Bangalore 560043

Any person or persons, Bank, financial institutions etc, having any valid right, title interest or any claim over the Schedule Property or any portions of it in any manner may with documentary evidence lodge their objections/ claim within 5 days from the date of this notice with the undersigned, if no valid objections are received within the stipulated date, our client shall proceed on the basis that there are no claims of whatsoever nature with regard to the Schedule property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Gramathana Property bearing Corporation Municipal No. 196/192, BBMP New E PID No. 53092178 49, situated at Kaggadasapura Village, Krishnaraja Pura Hobli, earlier Bangalore South Taluk, now Bangalore East Taluk, Old Property I.D. (PID) No. 83-182-196/192, now comes under the jurisdiction of Bruhath Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, Bangalore, measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 43 ½ feet, in all totally measuring 1740 Sq.ft., and Property bounded on:

East by: Property of Chikka Abbaiah and 10 Feet Road;
West by: Property belongs to Sridhar Reddy.,
North by: Property of V. Naveen S/o. T. Venkataswamy.,
South by: Property of G. Gopala Reddy;

Bangalore Dated: 09/02/2025

H.A. Manjunath Prasanna
Smt. Baby Sindhu.P
Shyama Sundar
Mangala, Chaitanya
M/S. CHAMPS Associates
Advocates and solicitors
NO. 11, G-6, V.M.C. COMPLEX, 10TH CROSS, CUBBON PET, BANGALORE: 560 002.
9663375969, 9945215327,

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby put to notice that **Smt.PUSHPA, W/o. Manjunath Reddy,** residing at No.168, Near MICO Layout, Begur Road, Water plant, Near Kulla Reddy layout, Bangalore South, Bangalore – 560068, is the absolute owner of the Schedule Property and she represented that she has lost/misplaced the original **(1)** Gift Deed dated 25/02/2016, registered as Document No.MDP-1-08636/2015-16, Stored in CD No.MDPD177 in the office of Sub-registrar, Mahadevapura and **(2)** Sale deed dated 20/02/2006 registered as Document No.KRI-1-19270/2005-06, Stored in CD No.KRID186, in the Office of Sub-registrar, K.R.Puram with respect to the Schedule Property. Smt.Pushpa has lodged a police complaint on 06/10/2024 and 05/02/2025 respectively, before the Crime Branch, Bengaluru City Police, Bangalore regarding lost/misplaced of above said documents.

Further, my client intends to purchase the Schedule Property from its owner **Smt.Pushpa**. If any person/s having any right, title or claims, objections or interest over the Schedule Property may lodge their claims/objections with documentary proof within **7 days** from this day to the undersigned counsel. Failing which, it shall be deemed that there are no claims/ objections over the Schedule Property and my client shall proceed with the transaction and complete the sale transaction to purchase the Schedule Property free from all encumbrances by procuring the Certified copy of the aforesaid Sale deed and Gift deed and the same will be construed and considered as the Original for all practical and legal purposes. Any claims received beyond **7 days** will not be considered.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of Property bearing Katha No.8A, **Property No.372,** having New PID No.4738613966, Assessment No.1795/372/8A, situated at **near Rajesheri Layout, Mahadevapura Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore District,** now under the administrative jurisdiction of BBMP, measuring East to West **27 feet** and North to South **22 feet** totally measuring **594 Sq.feet,,** along with building thereon and bounded on the:

East by : **House belongs to Venkataswamy;**
West by : **House belongs to Chikkathayamma;**
North by : **House belongs to Muniguramma;**
South by : **10 feet Road**

G.V. Sudhakar, Advocate
No. 3, 4, 5 & 8, First Floor, Abhayashrama Complex, 4th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bangalore-560 027
Ph : 080-42194390, 9886359644

PUBLIC NOTICE

BEFORE THE DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -I AT BENGALURU

Original Application No.844 /2023

BETWEEN : CANARA BANK , (erstwhile syndicate Bank) Sheshadripuram Branch, No. 179, Roopa Complex, 1st Main Road, Sheshadripuram, Bengaluru - 560 020. Represented by its Manager, Khirod Chandra Behra, S/o. Raghunath Behra, aged about 36 years, E-mail: cb0794@canarabank.com. **...Applicant**

AND

Smt. Rajeshwari R. (Borrower)
...Defendant

SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES 1993 TO THE DEFENDANTS THROUGH PAPER PUBLICATION

To,

Smt. Rajeshwari R. (Borrower) D/o Ramachandrappa M., Aged about 44 years, Residing at No. 863, 4th cross, 4th Main, NGO Colony, Kamala Nagar, Basaveshwara Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 079. Mobile No. 8722995495, e-mail : penn.nila@gmail.com **...Defendant**

1. WHEREAS the applicant has instituted an application U/S 19 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 against defendant for recovery of sum of **Rs.29,37,223.93** (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakhs Thirty Seven Thousand Two Hundred and Twenty Three and Paise Ninety Three Only).
2. The above mentioned Defendant is directed to appear before the Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly authorised agent in support of your defense to show cause within 30 days from the date of publication or on **24.02.2025** at **10.30 A.M.** as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted.
3. Take notice that all in case default the Application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this 16.12.2024 at Bengaluru

Order of the Tribunal
Sd/- Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal -1

IN THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -I, AT BENGALURU

No. 1, 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore - 560 001

T.A. No.4/2024

Between: Bank of Baroda, Singena Agrahara Branch **....Applicant**

And

M/s. Banashankari Caterers ...Defendant

SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE 23(VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES, 1993 TO DEFENDANTS THROUGH PAPER PUBLICATION

To, M/s. Banashankari Caterers, Represented by its Proprietor, Mr. Nagesh C, at No. 30/43, Hulimangala Main Road, Thirupalya Village, Bommasandra Post, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluka, Bengaluru - 560 099.

Whereas, the Applicant Bank has instituted an application under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Bankruptcy Act, 1993, against you for the recovery of sum of **Rs.23,18,681.95** (Rupees Twenty Three Lakhs Eighteen Thousand Six Hundred and Eighty One and Ninety Five Paise Only) with current and future interest, cost and other reliefs. You hereby required to show-cause within 30 days from the date of publication of the summons on or before **07.03.2025 at 10:30 a.m.** in the forenoon in person or by a Pleader/ Advocate duly instructed as to why the reliefs prayed for should not be granted.

Take notice that in default of appearance, on the day mentioned hereinabove, the proceedings will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Hon'ble Tribunal on 21.11.2024.

Sd/- Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal -I , Bangalore
Advocate for Applicant Bank
Prakash Hegde K.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that our client has offered to purchase the immovable property described in the Schedule hereunder from its owner **Mr.Mohammed Azzan,** son of Mr.Mohammed Akram, residing at No.42/1, Hutchins Main Road, St.Thomas Town, Bangalore : 560084.

Any person/s having or claiming any manner of right, title, lien and interest in respect of the Schedule property may intimate the same in writing to the undersigned with documentary evidence in support thereof within **seven days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the claims of all such person/s shall be deemed to have been waived or abandoned and our client will proceed with the conveyance as if no valid claims are subsisting against the Schedule property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of land together with the structures standing thereon comprising of Ground, First, Second and Third floors bearing **Municipal Corporation No.15, PID No.92-40-15,** (Earlier forming portion of larger property bearing Municipal No.15, Old Site Nos.23, 24, 25 & 26), situated at **4th Main, Chinnappa Garden,** Corporation New Ward No.62, Old Ward No.92, Bangalore and bounded on the :

EAST BY : Private Property;
WEST BY : Road;
NORTH BY : Premises No.15/2, belonging to Mrs.Shahtaj Begum;
SOUTH BY : Road;

and measuring :
EAST to WEST : 30 feet;
NORTH to SOUTH : 20 feet;

Totally measuring in all 600 Square feet;

NISSAR AHMED & RAGHAVENDRA, Advocates
No.40, Nandidurga Road, Bangalore - 560 046.
Dated: 09.02.2025 Place: Bangalore

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BALASORE

Phone : 9438660004, **e-mail-eephbls@gmail.com**

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement (Online Mode)

C-1599 **Invitation for Bids (IFB) dt.03.02.2025**

The Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Balasore on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites Item Rate bids in Double cover system in ONLINE mode only.

Sl. No	Name of the Work	Bid-Identification No.	Value of Work (Rs. In Lakh)	Class of contractor	Period of Completion	Availability of bid documents for online bidding From	To	Last date and time of seeking clarification	Date & Time of opening of technical bid
1	Supply of ISI Marked DI (K-7) Pipes for different Pipe Water Supply Projects of Soro Municipality & Remuna N.A.C. under State Plan.	SEPHBLS-31 dt.03.02.2025	266.19	Manufacturer	60 (Sixty) Days	11:00 Hrs. of dt.10.02.2025	17:00 Hrs. of dt.25.02.2025	17:00 Hrs. Of 19.02.2025	11:00 Hrs. Of 27.02.2025

The bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: http://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Name and Address of the officer inviting bid :- The Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Balasore-756056, Odisha, Phone : 9438660004

OIPR-13053/11/0017/2425 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Balasore

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CHIKKAMAGALURU INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, CHIKKAMAGALURU

(Autonomous Medical Institution, Government of Karnataka)
Phone: 08262 - 295347 - Email Address: directorcims2020@gmail.com

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

(TWO COVER BID SYSTEM)

Ref No: CIMS/Sup/Tenders/Paper Publish/24-25 **Dated:04-02-2025**

Chikkamagaluru Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS), Chikkamagaluru invites E-tender for Supply of below various items to the Aralaguppe Mallegowda Hospital and CIMS Chikkamagaluru from the Manufacture/s or Authorized Dealers in two cover bid system as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act - 1999 and Rules threunder. Submissionof e-tender and other details can be obtained in e-procurement portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sl No	Description	Tender Approximate	Tender Start date	Tender Last
01	Supply of Ride on Automatic Scrubber dryer to the CIMS, Chikkamagaluru	48.00 Lakhs (EMD Rs.1,20,000)	11-02-2025	27-02-2025
02	Supply of Anesthesia Work Station to the Aralaguppe Mallegowda Hospital	60.00 Lakhs (EMD Rs. 1,20,000)	11-02-2025	27-02-2025

Sd/- Director,
Chikkamagalur Institute of Medical Sciences, Chikkamagaluru

RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA

On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No. / Due Date	Description	Qty.(Nos./ Sets)	EMD (Rs.)
1.	17241618/04.03.2025 AC3T	Air Inlet Duct for LHB	66 Nos	1,59,720/-
2.	17241207A/24.02.2025	1) Interior Stickers with Braille Script For LHB SCN Coach to PL No. 33592093	648 Set	1261020/-
		2) Interior Stickers with Braille Script For LHB NON AC Chair Car Coach to PL No.33592081	170 Set	
		3) Interior Stickers with Braille Script For LHB SLR (31 Seater) Coaches to PL No.33599506	111 Set	
		4) Interior Stickers with Braille Script For LHB AC 3 Tier Coaches to PL No.33680851	272 Set	
		5) Interior Stickers with Braille Script For LHB GS (ANTYODAYA) to PL No.33682239	748 Set	
3.	12251030/06.03.2025	Foot Step Arrangement For MEMU/TC 3-PHASE Coache PL No 30988317	643.00 Numbers	100150/-
4.	17241650A/03.03.2025	Supply and Installation of FRP Modular Toilet For AMRIT Bharat Pantry (LWC B/PP) Coaches	06.00 Set	2000000/-
		Supply and Installation of FRP Modular Toilet For AMRIT Bharat SLRD (LSLRD/PP2) Coaches	12.00 Set	
		Supply and Installation of FRP Modular Toilet For AMRIT Bharat SCN (LWSCN/PP2) & GS (LWS/PP2) Coaches	114.00 Set	
5.	05251040/07.03.2025	Under Frame Complete for Vande Bharat (5 items) PL No.33552370	18 Nos	2000000/-
		PL No.31111798	9 Nos	
		PL No.33552368	18 Nos	
		PL No.33552381	90 Nos	
		PL No.33552393	45 Nos	
	NOTE: All above mentioned tenders are e-tenders and all tenderers are requested to submit their bids on-line through the IREPS website at https://www.ireps.gov.in. For more details regarding the above mentioned tenders and other supply tenders please visit IREPS website.			
6.	17241578C/03.03.2025	Set of FRP Modular Toilet with Manufacturing Process SMC for LHB SCN and GS AMRIT BHARAT Coaches	380.00 Set	2000000/-
		Set of FRP Modular Toilet with Manufacturing Process SMC for LHB SLR HOG AMRIT BHARAT Coaches	40.00 Set	
7.	05251033/03.03.2025 Absorber Assembly	Secondary Energy	1802 Nos	501820/-
8.	01251013/10.03.2025	Fixation Ball Joint	29908Nos	118930/-
9.	04241052C/05.03.2025	Steel Coil 3x1250MM	20000.00 KG	68000.00/-
	Steel Coil 4x1250MM		20000.00 KG	
10.	05251030/06.03.2025	Integerated WTCC	1263	1848020/-
11.	01251013/10.03.2025	Fixation Ball Joint	29908 Nos	118930/-

1. For details and making On-line bids, visit Website **http://ireps.gov.in.** Drawings/specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF Website **http://www.rcf.indianrailways.gov.in**. Class IIIb digital signature certificate required for on-line bidding, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at **http://www.cce.gov.in**
2. Tenders will close at **14.25 HRS.** on due date and tender will be opened at **14.30 HRS.** Tenders **Sr. No.1 to 6** will be open at RCF Kapurthala and **Sr. No. 7 to 11** will be opened at Tilak Bridge, New Delhi. 3. For queries, contact IREPS Help desk at 011-24102855, 011-24105180 or RCF help desk at 011-23378658.

Note: GST Number of RCF is 03AAAGM0289C1ZT. All the suppliers are advised to quote this in dispatch documents for the supplies made by them.

PCMM

CORRIGENDUM

Bidders may please note the following changes and quote accordingly **1. Tender No. 17241631 Description:** for procurement of SET of Seats & Berths for (HL3 Complaint) L.H.B GS. SCN & AC3T Coaches. Existing Entry Due date 03.02.2025 Should be read as 13.02.2025 **2. Tender No. 12241538** for procurement of Four Types Non-AC Windows for LHB Coaches. Existing Due date 06.02.2025 Revised Should be read as **11.02.2025 3. Tender No. 13245024E** for procurement of Ground Roller 2 Ton. Existing Due date 07.02.2025 Should be read as **14.02.2025 4. Tender No. 17241207A Due on 24.02.2025** for VARIOUS TYPES OF INTERIOR STICKERS WITH BRAILLE SCRIPT. **Existing Entry:** Double Bid and **Tender No:** 17241207B, Should to be read as: Single Bid. **5. Tender No. 14241225 Due on 03.02.2025 Should be read as 10.02.2025** Stage Inspection **Existing Entry:** Nil, Should to be read as: 01 (Raw Material) **6. Tender No. 17231508 Due on 21.02.2025 Existing Entry:** 06.02.2025 Should be read as: 21.02.2025 **7. Tender No. 17241638 Due on 14.02.2025 Existing Entry:** Set of FRP Sidewall Panels for LHB GS Coaches as per drawing MPLSPLWS Version 9 due date: 03.02.2025 **Existing Entry to be read as :** Set of FRP Sidewall Panels for LHB GS Coaches as per drawing MPLSPLWS Version 10 due date: 14.02.2025 **8. Tender No. 17241586 Due on 20.02.2025 Existing Entry:** 04.02.2025 Revised **Should to be read as :** 20.02.2025 **9. Tender No. 12231399B** for the procurement of NON AC Area Ceiling Arrgt. For LHB AC 3 Tier Coaches. **Existing Entry:** 03.02.2025 **Should to be read as :** 13.02.2025 **10. Tender No. 05241897** Brake Disc for Wheel Set **Due Date:** 31.01.2025 **Amended Due Date :** 14.02.2025

PCMM

No. : 121-M/2024-25 **Dated: 08.02.2025**

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India

MALUR BRANCH
Padmavathi complex, Hosur Road, Opp Junior College, Maluru-563130

POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable Property)

Whereas: The undersigned being the authorised officer of **Union Bank of India, Malur Branch,** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Security Interest (Second) Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3. of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated **09.08.2024** calling upon the borrower **1. Mr. Cherukuri Chinavengaiah,** No.404, 5th floor, SV Palace, 14th cross, Hoysalanagar, Ramurthy nagar, Bangalore-560016, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs. 13,75,534.74** (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs Seventy Five Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Four Paise Seventy Four Only) plus interest from **09.08.2024,** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules on this **07th day of February 2025.**

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **Union Bank of India, Malur Branch,** for an amount **Rs. 13,75,534.74** (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs Seventy Five Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Four Paise Seventy Four Only) plus interest from **09.08.2024.**

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the borrower to redeem the secured assets.

Description of Immovable Property: All that piece and parcel of Immovable property bearing site no.23, bearing E-Katha No.150200401601221149, Katha/Assessment No.777/23/61, situated in the layout known as "JR Elite" formed in converted Survey no.61, Husukur Village, Bidarahalli hobli, Bangalore East Taluk formerly Bangalore south Taluk and Hoskote talukas, duly converted for non-agricultural residential purpose vide conversion order NO. ALN(EBK)SR/10/17-18, date: 08.03.2018, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore district, and Measuring East to West: 40 feet (forty feet) North to South: 50 feet (fifty feet), In total Measuring 185.81 Square meters (2,000 sqft), together with all rights. appurtenances in whatsoever manner whether underneath or above the surface and bounded on the: East by: Site no 24, West by: Road, North by: Road, South by: Site no 34.

Date: 07.02.2025 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place: Malur Branch **Union Bank of India**

Kerala police are examining footage from CCTV cameras for clues into the theft of nearly 4,800 tickets from a lottery shop in Kanjoor, near Kalady. "As many as 4,800 lottery tickets of Karunya, Karunya Plus and Nirmal series worth ₹1.9 lakh were stolen. Each ticket is priced at ₹40," police said

K'taka IAF officer dies as parachute fails to open during training

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Shivamogga

A 36-year-old Junior Warrant Officer of the Indian Air Force from Shivamogga district died after his parachute failed to deploy during a training exercise at the Paratrooper Training School in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, on Friday.

The victim has been identified as **GS Manjunath** from Sankuru village of Hosanagara taluk in Shivamogga district.

He is survived by his parents Suresh GM and Nagaratna, wife Kalpitha Sakia, brother Yuvraj GS, and sisters Suvarna GS and Anusuya GS.

According to sources, Manjunath joined the Air Force in 2005 and had served in Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, UP, and Delhi. He had been stationed in Agra for the last one-and-a-half months in the para jump division. Hailing from an agriculture family, Manjunath married Kalpitha from Assam in 2019, and the couple was expecting their first child.

The fatal incident occurred between 7 and 8 am on Friday during a para jump training session from a cargo aircraft at approximately 18,000 feet. While 11 jumpers completed their jumps safely, Manjunath's parachute malfunctioned. The mortal remains of the soldier will be flown from Agra to Bengaluru. The body will then reach Mavinakoppa Circle in Hosanagara by 7.30 am on Sunday.

One World (India) secures thrilling last-over win over Lanka

SAPTARSHI C @ Bengaluru

THE One World (India) secured a thrilling last-over win in the second edition of the One Nation One Family World Cup 2025 that took place in Karnataka on Saturday. The convergence of cricket greats, such as Venkatesh Prasad, Irfan Pathan, Yusuf Pathan, Marvan Atapattu, Aravinda De Silva, Muthiah Muralitharan, Arjuna Ranatunga and Chaminda Vaas, and others uplifted the purpose of the event.

Under the captaincy of Venkatesh Prasad, the team clinched the victory by 6 runs.

"The cause is the initiative of Sri Madhusudan Sai Global Humanitarian Mission (SMSGHM) to provide healthcare, nutrition and education across 80 countries where it is almost impossible for others to reach out. To improve the situation in Sri Lanka, the players voluntarily participated in this noble mission," one of the organisers told *The New Sunday Express*.

One World (India) and One Family (Sri Lanka) players pose at Sai Krishnan Cricket Stadium, Muddenahalli, on Saturday | EXPRESS

Atapattu, captain, One Family (Sri Lanka), said, "It is an honour for Sri Lankan cricketers to associate with SMSGHM and contribute to the noble cause. This match is a classic example of how cricket can bring together two countries.

Former India player Stuart Binny said, "It's a special day and we all played here for a great cause. Cricket brings love and respect among people and there would be no other way for cricketers to pass it to those who are in need."

Talking about the Champions Trophy which is going to start from February 19, Binny said, "The expectations are high. However, I believe the travel for the players will be the key aspect to consider as they hardly get time for rest."

Former India great, Sunil Gavaskar, who presided over the match, said, "Cricket for a cause is an occasion to celebrate humanity and support a mission, making a difference to millions of lives worldwide. Cricket in itself has never been just a sport in India, rather it has always been revered as a religion, and nothing can be better than cricketing icons coming together to support and uplift humanity. We thank Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai for the support. We hope to return next year for the third edition."

Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai said, "The One World One Family Cup is not merely a match, rather a collective effort by the SMSGHM mission and the cricketing fraternity to uplift the lives and livelihoods of millions who are deprived of even basic essentials. We intend to make a significant difference by spearheading several such novel initiatives that ultimately serve the cause of humanity. I am elated that everyone took some time out of their busy lives to share a strong message of unity, compassion and concern, collective responsibility and camaraderie, beyond the borders."

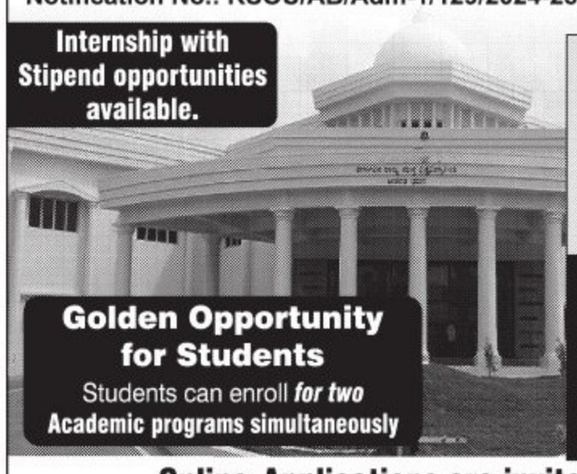
Over 3 million outpatient consultations and screenings, and 100,000 inpatient treatments including surgeries have been performed so far under SMSGHM mission.

KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY (KSOU)

MUKTHAGANGOTHRI, MYSURU – 570006, KARNATAKA.

Office Phone No.: 0821-2500981, 2519941 / 43 / 48 / 52, Help Line: 88003 35638 / 86905 44544.
e-mail: techsupport@ksouportal.com Website : www.ksoumysuru.ac.in

Notification No.: KSOU/AB/Adm-1/129/2024-25 Date: 06-02-2025



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- M.B.A. - through online entrance test
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- M.Com.
with Dual Specializations: • Accounting & Finance/HRM • Marketing Management & HRM/Finance
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"Britain and the US, the two countries that are supposed to have reached the summit of the world economy through their free-trade policy, are actually the ones that had most aggressively used protection and subsidies"

Ha-Joon Chang

TARIFF TWISTS TRIGGER TREMORS AND TURMOIL

THE THIRD EYE

SHANKKAR AIYAR
Author of *The Gated Republic, Aadhaar: A Biometric History of India's 12 Digit Revolution*, and *Accidental India*
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DIVINING the mind of Donald J Trump is a pulsating 24x7 parlour game. Trump's tariff tactics have triggered angst in national capitals and turmoil across global markets even as countries are yet to design their playbook for retaliation. His administration has acquired the countenance of reality shows.

Niccolo Machiavelli said, "Everyone sees what you seem to be, few have experience of who you really are." Trump embodies the poignant observation in spirit and words. His conduct attracts a parade of adjectives: mercurial, mesmerising, irrational, unpredictable, transactional, strategic, whimsical, capricious, bold and reckless.

Nations can scarcely argue against Trump's aspiration to leverage the size of the US economy to carve deals. What matters is the methodology. In recent weeks, Trump has threatened to take back the Panama canal, buy Greenland, target drug cartels in Mexico, create a 51st state by annexing Canada and even expressed the idea of taking over Gaza Strip, triggering a flurry of memes and a 4 am rejection by Saudi Arabia, which feared another nakba or catastrophe.

Trump has also ordered that the US pull out of the Paris climate accord, the WHO, the UNHRC, UNRWA; last week, he imposed sanctions on the International Criminal Court during the visit of Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, who has an arrest warrant against his name. The actions have left US allies, foes and frenemies wondering if there is a method in the madness.

Unsurprisingly, there is much lather about plausible comparisons from the past, including Richard Nixon's espousal of the "madman theory". For the record, the thesis didn't fly as Nixon struggled to sell it and as the US was mired in war under him. Comparisons are also drawn with others ranging from King George III, who lost American colonies to Napoleon, who invaded Russia in 1812 with disastrous consequences, to the mad genius Mohammad bin Tughlaq, who shifted the capital, imposed arbitrary taxes and replaced gold coins with metal tokens—episodes of good intent that ended disastrously.

Trump, in his second term, wants to script his legacy—and in his quest, oftentimes rewrites history that he has scripted. The world was agog on what the Trump policy would be on China, which is now in the crosshairs of bipartisan objectives. Instead, Trump also chose to target Mexico and Canada.

Consider the timeline. In the summer of 2017, Trump defined NAFTA as the "worst trade deal ever" and terminated it. This forced renegotiation and the birth of the USMCA agreement in October 2018. Trump said the new avatar "will bring all three great nations together" to compete with the rest of the world. In February 2025, Trump declared 25 percent tariffs on Canada and Mexico, upending the complex supply chains scaffolding the three economies, and the potential cost of $1,200 a year to consumers. In contrast, after a call with Xi Jinping, Trump toned down his rhetoric and tariffs to 10 percent against the promised 60 percent.

This week, Trump opened a new chapter as he declared he was veering towards a reciprocal tariff system. It's not an idle threat. In the last week of January, Congressman Riley M Moore introduced the US Reciprocal Trade Act, which has now acquired the Trump tag. Effectively, the US will impose tariffs equal to other countries' rates.

In the weeks past, Trump has threatened 100 percent tariffs on BRICS nations and called India a "very big abuser" in trade even as he called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a friend. This week, Modi is scheduled to meet Trump in Washington. India has, in its recent budget, scripted a pathway for negotiation—lifted foreign investment caps in insurance, opened up nuclear commerce and trimmed tariffs.

The record of tariff as an instrument for revenue and threat for a better deal for the US is rather fuzzy. In 1807, Thomas Jefferson passed the Embargo Act, imposing a ban on all trade with foreign nations in an effort to stay out of conflict, only to back out in 1809 following the impoverishment of farmers. In 1922, the US passed the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act and the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act in 1930, raising import duties to protect American businesses and farmers. This set off a tariff race across nations—the Macmillan tariff law by the UK in 1931, the Obertarif by Germany and similar steps by others.

Objective analysis suggests tariff threats are governed by the statute of necessary and sufficient conditions. In 2024, the US had a trade deficit of $1.2 trillion. The moot question is can higher tariffs boost localisation, deliver higher revenues and prop exports. Higher tariffs will be paid for by US consumers. It is mystifying what the proposed external revenue service will deliver. Further, tariffs are known to push the dollar higher—this may assuage some costs, but will end up impacting US industry and exports. The synchronised slowdown in 2019 of the world and US GDPs should be instructive.

Economist Charles Kindleberger, in The World in Depression 1929-1939, argues that the imposition of tariffs led to the collapse of world trade and played a significant role in creating the conditions and intensifying the Great Depression. The context today is hardly dissimilar. It is useful to remember that the powerful are also dependent.

TRUMPERIALISM PLANS TO CONTROL WORLD

POWER & POLITICS

PRABHU CHAWLA
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COLONISATION is dead; long live colonisation. The new-again president of the United States, Donald Trump, is convinced that the American *imperium* has been weakened by capitulation to liberal democracies by concession-oriented presidents. He wants to take the US back to pre-Second World War times when President Franklin Roosevelt kept aloof from the troubles of Europe and Britain. Ironically, those were the halcyon days of the British and European empires, whose decline in the late 1940s coincided with the rise of the American empire. Irony died as more than 4,00,000 American soldiers perished on the battlefields of Europe, an astronomical figure compared to Afghanistan and Iraq later.

Today, Trump is the uncrowned monarch of the US who surveys all. The elected sovereign craves to expand his empire without umpires, through mergers and acquisitions. His dreams are his missions. His *dil maange* more.

As capitalism proves its money power again, Trumpitalism comes up tops. Trumpian omnivorousness has acquired international dimensions. While his enemies accuse him of shooting from the lip—he wants to buy Greenland, take over the Panama Canal and convert Canada into the 51st state of the US—there is a method to his madness.

The 47th president's eyes are set upon war-torn Gaza. Though his stunned senior staff tried to walk back his statement that the US will "take over" Gaza and develop it into a Mediterranean riviera, Trump had no problem channelling his inner property magnate. In the presence of visiting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the White House, he announced his Gaza plan: "We'll own it and be responsible for dismantling all of the dangerous unexploded bombs and other weapons on the site, level the site and get rid of the destroyed buildings, level it out. Create an economic development that will supply unlimited numbers of jobs and housing for the people of the area... do a real job, do something different... This was not a decision made lightly. Everybody I've spoken to loves the idea of the United States owning that piece of land, developing and creating thousands of jobs with something that will be magnificent."

SOURAV ROY

Trump's power broker and property developer son-in-law Jared Kushner, his special envoy to West Asia during his first term and the force behind the 'Abraham Accords' that aim to normalise relations between Israel and Arab countries, said, "Gaza's waterfront property could be very valuable if people would focus on building up livelihoods." In 2024, Kushner had distilled the entire Arab-Israeli conflict into "nothing more than a real estate dispute between Israelis and Palestinians", exemplifying corporate geopolitik that could shape global discourse.

It wasn't the first time that the US president was expressing his expansionist adventurism. He uses social media platforms to announce his executive actions and policy framework, commenting on Truth Social, which he owns, that the US pays "hundreds of billions of dollars to subsidise Canada", and "without this massive subsidy, Canada ceases to exist as a viable country". On Greenland, Trump declared, "I don't really know what claim Denmark has to it, but it would be a very unfriendly act if they didn't allow that to happen because it's for the protection of the free world."

In 2019, he had said that US control was an "absolute necessity" for strategic reasons and global security. This time he moaned, "China is running the Panama Canal that was not given to China, that was given to Panama foolishly (by Jimmy Carter in 1977), but they violated the agreement, and we're going to take it back, or something very powerful is going to happen." Trump suspects the canal's management has been taken over by Chinese companies that are fleecing American ships by levying exorbitant tariffs. The threat worked: the US state department announced that Panama has agreed to allow free passage to American ships through the 82-km canal.

Trump has also revved up dollar imperialism by focusing on keeping the greenback as the main currency for international trade and commerce. It's his trump card—the most powerful weapon to dominate, dictate and direct the international economic ecosystem. For the past few years, a China-led group of nations has been trying to replace it with other currencies to delink global trade from the US-controlled financial architecture. The American establishment feels that BRICS—especially the bloc's original members Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—are working on an alternative currency, a charge India has always denied.

Trump warned, "The idea that the BRICS countries are trying to move away from the dollar, while we stand by and watch, is OVER... We are going to require a commitment from these seemingly hostile countries that they will neither create a new BRICS currency, nor back any other currency to replace the mighty US dollar, or they will face 100 percent tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful US economy. They can go find another sucker nation. There is no chance that BRICS will replace the US dollar in international trade, or anywhere else, and any country that tries should say hello to tariffs and goodbye to America!"

Trump's MAGA is now MAGGA—Make America Globally Great Again. He has unleashed an optimal mix of conventional tricks of the trade with modern internationalism. POTUS and his corporate lackeys are taking a leaf from the British empire. Perhaps they have been told that dominating trade and territory using tradecraft and commerce is the best winning model. In the 1600s, the British East India Company landed in India by sea and became the ruler of a large swathe of it by 1757. The British government enacted numerous laws to authorise revenue collection. In 1883, a governor general was appointed to administer British India.

Trump's acquisitive aspirations may not be an exact replica. But he has extensively deployed powerful oligarchs like Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos to exclusively connect the world through their platforms. Not only are they influencing voters' minds, but are also actively involved in regime change through hidden technological tools. Since most countries roll out the red carpet for them, Trump uses them for various strategic missions. Musk is dealing with Ukraine's Zelenskyy, Russia's Putin and West Asian leaders. He has organised a cabal of jetset gig giants, dodgy diplomats and mighty military as the contemporary substitute for the British empire. A new global empire on which the Sun would never set is the Trumperialist dream to control the world.

MAKING COACHING CENTRES REDUNDANT

OPINION

GEETHA RAVICHANDRAN
Former bureaucrat and author, most recently of *The Spell of the Rain Tree*

A well-known chain of coaching centres abruptly shut down at some locations recently and left a large number of students in the lurch. The news was disturbing, but unsurprising. Prior to this, another coaching giant was dragged to the courts by creditors, leaving behind a trail of unpaid salaries and disrupting the lives of its students.

There is sufficient awareness about the unreliability and exploitative practices of shadow education institutions. The recent Tamil film *Vettaiyan* highlights how coaching centres lure students with the promise of 100 percent success in competitive exams, aggressive upselling and foisting of loans on students. Many students and parents found this graphic portrayal relatable.

Coaching centres have come under criticism for lack of infrastructure, faking stories of successful candidates and putting students under intense pressure. Tragic suicides of students who trusted this system point to deep fault lines. Coaching institutions have leveraged the deficiencies in the school education system and the system of entrance tests for higher education and competitive examinations for employment, growing in reach and influence.

The size of the private tutoring industry in India in 2024 was around ₹58,000 crore. It is expected to grow at 15 percent a year. As long as the preference for STEM education and the system of entrance exams for higher education persist, coaching centres will continue to thrive. But the moot point is that they have managed to diminish the experience of school education, especially in the later years. Several institutes tie up with schools and get students to exclusively pursue the engineering or medical entrance examination syllabus. Students enrol in such dummy schools to focus on cracking competitive examinations. The vital years in a student's life are thus skewed, leading to mental and physical health challenges.

The proliferation of the shadow education industry is a global phenomenon, especially in countries where academic excellence is considered important. The need for reform in the education system as well as in the method of deciding eligibility for professional courses has been a matter of discussion for many years. The National Education Policy 2020 talks about the shift to formative assessments as opposed to summative assessments, as well as the need to eliminate coaching classes. Improving the quality of school education by investing in good teachers, paying them salaries commensurate with their qualifications will effectively improve learning outcomes.

Coaching institutes acquired a new dimension during the pandemic, leveraging technology to conduct online classes. This saw an explosive growth of educational technologies, with thousands of startups entering the market. In the post-pandemic period, the sector witnessed a downturn as schools reopened and traditional or hybrid models of learning resumed. In an oversaturated market, this period has been marked by a fall in investment, non-payment of salaries and loss of jobs.

Some coaching centres not only use unfair or illegal methods, but they also impair the mental and physical health of students. Technology, optimally mixed with classroom teaching, can obviate the need for remedial coaching

The rapid growth of the coaching and edtech industries has been aided by the fact that there is no regulatory oversight. In January 2024, guidelines for coaching centres were issued by the central government. However, since education is a state subject, there are gaps in implementation. It is also necessary to appreciate success stories of smaller coaching centres who identify talent and engage with students, giving them personalised attention. It is surprising that this model has not been replicated widely. It is only undiluted commitment and consistent efforts that can add value to learning.

Most schools and colleges are run as not-for-profits, claiming exemptions under the Income Tax Act, even though they make questionable collections. It is also true that there are private schools in rural and urban areas charging astronomical fees even at the primary level. Compounding this problem are profit-seeking coaching institutes. Fees are collected in advance; refund policies are opaque. This issue is required to be urgently addressed with a cap on the fees chargeable.

It is important to reform the system and not throw out the baby with the bathwater. If the edtech space is adequately regulated, it could be a valuable tool. One of the drivers of the National Education Policy 2020 is tech-enabled teaching and learning. Edtech could be integrated into the core education value chain and provide supplementary learning methodologies and skill development initiatives in schools and training colleges.

Artificial intelligence can be a tool for personalised tutoring, giving real-time feedback. There is a need to navigate these changes by retaining the best practices in classroom teaching and edtech pedagogy. Use of gamification modules for learning through interaction and competitiveness can also benefit the student community.

But the mentoring and motivation students receive from interaction with a teacher in a classroom setting is not likely to be substituted by an online avatar. What's needed is an optimal mix.

QUOTE CORNER

Who sells the drugs in the US that have caused so much tragedy? They should start with their own country. Of course, we are going to coordinate and collaborate. Never subordination or interference—it's coordination.

Claudia Sheinbaum, Mexican president, after the US department of justice announced a major shift in approach to the "total elimination of drug cartels"

Elon Musk, you may have illegally seized power over the financial payment systems of the treasury department, but you don't control the money of the American people. The US Congress does that.

Jamie Raskin, the top Democrat on the US House judiciary committee

Whenever we lose, everyone becomes a villain. Jadeja goes always under the radar. He is a 'Jackpot Jango'. We don't give Jadeja enough credit.

R Ashwin on his Chennai Super Kings teammate Ravindra Jadeja

MAILBAG WRITE TO letters@newindianexpress.com

Troubled alliance

The resounding victory for the BJP in Delhi is a slap in the face of both the AAP and the Congress, who chose not to team up. The lies these parties have been spreading about the BJP's election strategies found no water with the electorate. The Congress finds itself reduced to a non-entity in the national capital and has come a distant third. It could signal the beginning of the end for the INDIA bloc.

C M Umanath, Kozhikode

Reassess direction

The Delhi election results mark a significant political shift. Notably, Arvind Kejriwal himself suffered a defeat in his constituency. Kejriwal's leadership style has come under scrutiny, with accusations of arrogance and a failure to align with alliance partners. This insular approach may have contributed to AAP's inability to gauge the electorate's sentiment, leading to the significant setback. Given this, it's imperative for the INDIA bloc to reassess its internal cohesion and strategic direction.

K J Haroon Basha, Vaniyambadi

Congress decimated

Kudos to Delhiites for throwing out Arvind Kejriwal and bringing the BJP back after nearly 27 years. Modi magic seems to have worked again. BJP's micro management of the poll process coupled with the support of the middle class rendered the comfortable win. On the other hand, it's deplorable to note that grand old party is decimated in Delhi.

S K Ramesh, Ballari

Arguing arsonists

Ref: *When the basic right to breathe is curtailed* (Feb 8). The Supreme Court's relentless intervention in Delhi's pollution crisis is like a firefighter dousing flames while the arsonists argue over who lit the match. The executive's inaction, masked by blame games, is a tragicomedy. Without urgent and coordinated action, this environmental disaster will only spiral further. Governance cannot be a game of shifting sands; firm action is needed.

Suraiya Chishty, Bengaluru

Staying alive

Ref: *The Beatles reinvent music again* (Feb 8). The Beatles' Grammy win for their AI-assisted track has hit the right note. This collaboration is an icing on the cake, showcasing the band's willingness to think outside the box. By embracing AI technology, they're pushing the envelope and taking their music to new heights. This innovative approach is a breath of fresh air, proving that even the most iconic bands can stay ahead of the curve.

Sridevi Tejaswani, Chennai

Faulty recruitment

Ref: *Infosys lays off 400 recruits in Mysuru* (Feb 8). Infosys has claimed that the 400 were laid off as they failed to clear internal assessments after foundational training. All were said to have been given three attempts to clear the assessment. If that is the case, there is something wrong with Infosys's recruitment process. Otherwise, how could such a large number of recruits fail the assessment?

Sankaranarayanan K C, Ernakulam

Review lay-offs

The unceremonious lay-off is sending shockwaves. Such decisions, within four months after making them wait for over two years, do not indicate sound management practices. It is essential for the company to review this decision in all fairness.

Rajarao Kumar, Bengaluru

Illegal immigrants

Ref: *Cuffing avoidable, shared concerns with US: Centre* (Feb 8). India questioned the US amid widespread outrage over shackling some of the 104 deportees. I wonder why India should complain, when it is a standard operating procedure for US while deporting illegal entrants. India can explain its stand of promising to send civilian aircraft to bring back future deportees. Let us have our strict rules too regarding illegal immigrants in the country.

K V Raghuram, Wayanad

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Amit Shah @AmitShah

Delhiites have shown that public cannot be misled by repeated false promises. They have responded to the dirty Yamuna, dirty drinking water, broken roads, overflowing sewers and liquor shops open in every street...

Rahul Gandhi @RahulGandhi

The fight against pollution, inflation, and corruption — for the progress of Delhi and the rights of its citizens — will continue.

Aaditya Thackeray @AUThackeray

For almost 7 decades post independence, largely everyone took pride in the conduct of elections in India. As of today, nobody can claim the elections in our country are held in a free and fair manner.

RSS plays key role as party's strategy, put into motion 18 months before polls, focused on daily issues of people

BJP BETS BIG ON AAP CORRUPTION

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR & ASHISH SRIVASTAVA
@ New Delhi

BETTER late than never. 27 years is not a short duration in electoral politics. But credit is due to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for not giving up, whatever be the odds and for making comebacks, as the party on February 8, 2025 proved again in the Delhi assembly polls.

The BJP's gains in Delhi, as is typical of the party, can be attributed to a well-thought-out electoral strategy that was put in motion about 18 months before the election date. The party's strategy focused on addressing key issues plaguing people's daily lives, particularly emphasising corruption allegations against the AAP leaders, including Arvind Kejriwal.

The Budget 2025 also had one of the factors that seemingly contributed to the BJP's victory — the tax rebate proposed in the budget making normal income up to ₹12 lakh tax-free for the fiscal year 2025-26. For, the middle class has been a decisive factor. The fiscal strategy seems to have resonated with this demographic, who were grappling with economic uncertainties and inflation. Moreover, the BJP's emphasis on governance stability — double-engine sarkar — and growth promise, offered a sense of security and continuity among the middle-class.

In 2015, AAP's meteoric rise was fuelled by a promise of transparency, accountability, and a break from corruption. The party's anti-corruption stance resonated deeply with the middle class. However, as AAP's tenure progressed, the middle class began to reassess their support. Despite the party's welfare initiatives and promises of free electricity, water, and bus rides, which once served as a major vote-puller, the narrative began to shift. The middle class, often characterised by a pragmatic outlook, began to question the sustainability of AAP's promises.

Besides, the BJP's campaign effectively capitalised on the middle class' growing concerns over governance paralysis under AAP's recent tenure. Additionally, the BJP's strategic outreach to communities such as Uttarakhandis, Poorvanchalis, and urban villagers further solidified its position among the middle class.

The BJP's think-tank had researched what the people needed from the government, and they took action, focusing on problems like the unhygienic state of the Yamuna River.

The RSS, which had a significant role in shaping the election outcomes in Haryana and Maharashtra, also played a major part in Delhi. It conducted over a thousand small meetings across various local pockets, even engaging with intellectual leaders among Muslims.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's three rallies, which attracted massive crowds, particularly among women and youth, further boosted BJP's prospects in the capital, experts say.

The BJP had thrown in all its efforts and fleets of leaders to win Delhi. And win it did.

BJP supporters celebrate the Delhi assembly election win outside the party office in New Delhi on Saturday | SHEKHAR YADAV

AAP'S BANE CAN BE CONG'S BOON

1. While the BJP won Delhi with 45.8 per cent vote share, the Congress has improved its share by 2 percentage points to 6.4 per cent
2. Though the grand old party drew a blank, it dented the prospects of many candidates including AAP bigwigs in as many as 14 seats
3. AAP's defeat in Delhi will be felt in neighbouring Punjab as well as Gujarat. It will benefit Congress in the long run, says a Congress leader
4. Congress decided to go solo in Delhi to revive the sagging fortunes of the party in the state

In INDIA bloc, Cong sees opportunity in AAP's loss

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THOUGH the Congress failed to open its account in Delhi for the third consecutive term, the grand old party does not appear to regret its decision to contest elections in the state alone.

In the fiercely fought battle, the BJP stormed to power with 45.8 per cent vote share, the Congress has improved its share by 2 percentage points to 6.4 per cent. Though the grand old party drew a blank, it dented the prospects of many candidates including AAP bigwigs in as many as 14 seats.

Though the defeat in Delhi drew criticism from several INDIA bloc leaders, the Congress appears to be confident about spreading its footprints in Delhi in the coming years.

"The Congress was expecting to do better. It has, however, increased its vote share. The campaign of the Congress was vigorous. It may not be in the assembly, but it is definitely a presence in Delhi, a presence that will be expanded electorally with the sustained efforts of lakhs of Congress workers. There will be a Congress government once again in Delhi in 2030," said AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh on X.

"The implications of AAP's defeat in Delhi will be felt in Punjab and Gujarat. It will benefit Congress in the long run," said a Congress leader.

The grand old party's decision to go solo in Delhi was driven by the ambition of reviving the sagging fortunes of the party, which ruled Delhi for 15 years. The decision came months after it contested the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in an alliance with the AAP. It is no surprise that many Congress leaders seem to be rejoicing the defeat of the AAP, as they feel that the meteoric rise of the 'Jhadoo party' was at their expense.

The Delhi election 2025 result clearly highlights that the RSS-BJP's divisive agenda can only be effectively countered through a united, ideological and political front

D Raja, CPI General Secretary

•••••

It's a historic moment. BJP's victory is a clear message that Prime Minister Modi resides in the heart of Delhi. AAP is a factory of lies, encyclopedia of lies and a factory of corruption

JP Nadda, BJP leader & Union Minister

•••••

AAP can say they are just 4-5% behind BJP in terms of vote share but both Kejriwal and Sisodia losing despite all the efforts is a huge setback, which raises questions about the party's future

Yogendra Yadav, Swaraj India leader

Delhi decision exposes unease in broad Oppn unity

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

INDIA bloc parties SP and TMC backed AAP

The months-long Delhi polls campaign has often witnessed ugly spats, with many parties — including the Samajwadi Party and the Trinamool Congress, though they had no stakes in Delhi — throwing their weight behind AAP on the grounds that it was best-suited to take on the BJP.

THE BJP's massive victory in the Delhi assembly elections appears to have deepened fissures in the rival camp, which has already been grappling with internal conflicts after setbacks in Haryana and Maharashtra.

The unease in the INDIA bloc was apparent on Saturday, with many leaders voicing their disappointment.

Jammu and Kashmir CM and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah criticised both the Congress and AAP over the humiliating defeat. "Keep fighting each other," Abdullah posted on X, along with a meme.

Sanjay Raut, a leader from another INDIA bloc ally Shiv Sena (UBT), claimed that the two parties would have won the Delhi election had they fought it together. "The early trends show a sharp competition. Had the Congress and AAP been together, the results may have been different. The political opponent of both the AAP and the Congress is BJP. Both of them fought to keep the BJP from coming to power, but they fought individually. If they had been together, the BJP's defeat must have been confirmed in the first hour of counting," Raut said.

The months-long election campaign has often witnessed ugly spats, with many parties — including the Samajwadi Party and the Trinamool Congress, though they had no stakes in Delhi — throwing their weight behind AAP on the grounds that it was best-suited to take on the BJP.

The Congress, the main player of the bloc, ran a high-decibel campaign against the AAP, leading to a lot of bad blood between the two parties. Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra launched a no-holds-barred attack on the AAP and its convener Arvind Kejriwal with jibes like the "architect of liquor scam" and "sheesh mahal" being a regular feature in their speeches.

The future of the bloc seems uncertain with the Congress and AAP still not willing to reconcile their differences.

AAP national ambition takes a severe beating

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

THE first-ever defeat in assembly elections in the national capital since its emergence has certainly hurt the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) national ambition. With this dramatic loss in its first citadel, AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal, who was once discussed in the power corridors as potential prime ministerial candidate, is expected to have a tough time while bargaining for its share with the INDIA bloc partners.

A former AAP leader said that after a drubbing in Haryana, the Delhi setback leaves the party on a sticky wicket and makes it difficult for Kejriwal to assert his position in the INDIA bloc. The AAP could get just 1.76 per cent of vote share despite contesting all 90 assembly constituencies in Haryana.

After a significant electoral debut in December 2013, and wiping out the traditional players in 2015, the AAP managed to retain its charm in the 2020 assembly elections too. An unambiguous electoral success in Punjab in 2022 further consolidated the AAP's spot as a formidable player at the national level. The same year, it swept the Delhi municipal elections and captured 12.9 per cent vote share in the Gujarat assembly polls. Kejriwal apparently looked inexorable. His political opponents believed that he could dictate his terms while forging alliances. His aspiration to propel at the national level also seemed justified, though AAP failed to make a mark in the Lok Sabha.

In December 2023, Kejriwal proclaimed expansion of the party in other states. He also announced that the AAP would campaign and contest all the seats as a member of the INDIA bloc.

Now defeat of the party in Delhi will give a boost to its critics and rivals who have been dismissive of the AAP.

With 21 states, BJP may push ONOE, UCC

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

WITH its decisive victory in the national capital, the BJP has received a shot in the arm to push its long-term ideological projects such as 'One Nation One Election' and the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

With the defeat of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi, the number of INDIA bloc governments in the country has come down to eight. There are non-BJP governments currently in Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal. In contrast, the BJP-led NDA helms 21 states and UTs. The BJP alone has its government in 15 states, including Delhi now.

The implementation of UCC, one of the core agendas of the BJP, has been a part its election manifestos for a long time. Reiterating the government's commitment, Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently said that they will implement the UCC in all BJP-ruled states. "Under Article 44, our Constitution talks about the UCC. It did not become a reality because Jawaharlal Nehru brought in the Muslim Personal Law," Shah said in a recent speech in Parliament.

While Uttarakhand is the first state to implement the UCC on January 27, one of the key elements — the mandatory registration of live-in relationships between consenting adults — has sparked debates and protests in many quarters. The Uttarakhand UCC defines a live-in relationship as "one between a man and a woman, who cohabit in a shared household through a relationship in the nature of marriage".

Another BJP-ruled state, Gujarat, too followed suit and set up a committee headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Desai to draft a bill within 45 days. Other similar states such as Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Madhya Pradesh have also expressed their intent to implement a common civil code, with Uttarakhand being the model.

Several BJP-ruled states intend to implement UCC

Uttarakhand is the first state to implement the UCC on January 27, though one of its key elements — the mandatory registration of live-in relationships — sparked debates and protests from many quarters. Gujarat followed suit and set up a committee to draft a bill in 45 days. Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Madhya Pradesh have expressed similar intent to implement a common civil code.

With more states in its kitty, the BJP is expected to push further its ambitious 'One Nation One Election' Bill, which may require amendments to the Constitution of India.

One of the key proposals was that a one-time transitory measure would be necessary to synchronise the Lok Sabha and assembly elections. This includes the curtailing or extension of the tenures of several state assemblies to implement simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha and state assemblies.

The One Nation One Election committee recommended that the President of India may, by a notification issued on the date of the first sitting of the Lok Sabha after a general election, bring into force the provision of this Article and that the date of the notification shall be called the 'Appointed Date'.

All the Opposition parties have vehemently opposed the Bill, arguing that it will be detrimental to federal principles. However, with the opposition states in decline, the ruling BJP may face less resistance in implementation of the Bill.

ARVIND KEJRIWAL

A KUMBH TO KUMBH REIGN

SHEKHAR SINGH

SOURAV ROY

THE 2013 Maha Kumbh marked Arvind Kejriwal's stunning rise as he ended Sheila Dikshit's Congress rule of 15 years. Twelve years later, another Maha Kumbh is marking his exit. The manner in which he fell in the eyes of the capital's 'aam aadmi', it seems Kejriwal, who said he wanted to clean up Delhi, got swept away in the Yamuna's murky water.

The Aam Aadmi Party was born of a movement, not conventional politics. Kejriwal, then a tax commissioner turned anti-corruption activist, had captured the imagination of Delhi's middle classes who were disillusioned with scams and a policy paralysis during the Congress-led UPA 2. He rode to power promising to "change the way politics is normally done", introduced the Jan Lokpal Bill to cleanse the system of 'muck', and selected the broom as his party's symbol to evoke cleanliness. He stood for nothing less than a thorough disruption of the status quo.

The first AAP government, set up in 2013 in collaboration with the Congress, collapsed after only 49 days; Kejriwal cited disagreements over the Jan Lokpal Bill as the reason. His resignation only fuelled AAP's popularity. In 2015, AAP won a landslide, securing 67 of the Delhi assembly's 70 seats. Kejriwal's promise of free electricity and water, and improvements in health and education cemented him as a leader for the common people. No wonder that the party repeated its success in 2020, winning 62 seats and defying BJP's national dominance.

However, with power came scrutiny, and the cracks began to surface. This time, AAP was no longer an underdog fighting a corrupt system — it had become the system.

The irony of AAP's collapse is that the very issue that brought it to power — corruption — became its Achilles' heel. The party that once promised an honest government found itself embroiled in the liquor policy scam, which led to the arrests of its top leaders, including Manish Sisodia, and Kejriwal himself. The scam painted the party as one that had betrayed its core promise of transparency.

Adding to the damage was the 'Sheesh Mahal' controversy, where the chief minister's lavish residence renovation — allegedly costing ₹33.66 crore — was used by the opposition to highlight the distance from the common man. For a leader who once mocked 'VIP culture' and flaunted his modesty, the revelations shattered his carefully cultivated image of simplicity.

AAP frequently blamed the BJP-led Centre for its governance challenges, accusing it of deliberately creating roadblocks. Whether it was the delay in clearing the state budget, control over bureaucrats or tussle over services, AAP maintained that it was being deliberately sabotaged.

This narrative of victimhood worked for a while. But by 2025, the electorate had become weary of it. After a decade in power, voters expected solutions, not excuses. The BJP's 'double-engine government' pitch resonated with those who saw AAP as perpetually engaged in conflict rather than governance.

NEWSMAKER

Unfulfilled promises — particularly the failure to curb air pollution — became a major election issue. Despite grand announcements, the crisis remained severe, exposing AAP's limitations in tackling one of Delhi's most pressing problems.

The middle class, once AAP's core vote base, gradually drifted away. The Modi government's income tax relief, announced just before the elections, was attractive. The BJP successfully projected itself as the champion of the urban salaried class, undercutting AAP's base.

Kejriwal's appeal once lay in his ability to connect with this constituents — office-goers, small business owners and professionals. But as AAP's image took a hit, these voters found BJP's promise of stability and financial relief more appealing.

Kejriwal was once AAP's greatest asset. His simplicity and ability to take on powerful figures made him a star. But as governance challenges persisted and his attention was diverted by other state elections, his stardom dimmed.

Can the party recover in the capital? For now, the dream run is over. Kejriwal, who once shook Delhi's politics, is now fighting for relevance.

BLAZE AT BULLET TRAIN SITE

A fire broke out at the under-construction Sabarmati bullet train station in Ahmedabad in the early hours of Saturday, an official said, adding, no casualties were reported. Welding sparks from shuttering work is believed to be the likely cause of the fire.

2 KILLED AS CAR FALLS INTO GORGE IN SHIMLA

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	27	17	Mumbai	32	24
Bhopal	23	11	Panaji	32	28
Jaipur	24	10	Patna	41	27
Amritsar	21	07	Lucknow	42	27
Chennai	31	23	Port Blair	34	28
Kolkata	29	17	Imphal	23	18
Srinagar	13	-03	Chandigarh	42	23

BJP wins bypoll after Ayodhya jolt

Defeats SP Faizabad Lok Sabha MP Awadhesh Prasad's son by more than 61K votes in battle

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

THE BJP delivered a rude shock to its main rival, the Samajwadi Party (SP), in the Milkipur bypoll by clinching a resounding victory with a margin of over 61,000 votes.

With this win, the BJP reinforced the message that it still stands firm in the Ayodhya belt, the nerve centre of its characteristic politics.

BJP candidate Chandrabhanu Paswan defeated SP's Ajit Prasad, son of Faizabad MP Awadhesh Prasad, by an emphatic margin of 61,710 votes in a high-stakes electoral clash dubbed as a battle of prestige for both the ruling party and the main opposition.

The bypoll in the reserved assembly seat was necessitated after SP MLA Awadhesh Prasad vacated it following his election to Lok Sabha from Faizabad in 2024.

The Milkipur contest boiled down to a direct contest between the BJP and the SP. This is the third time ever that the BJP romped home in Milkipur, with a sizable population of Dalits, Yadavs and Muslims. The BJP emerged victorious from the seat in 2017 and 1991.

With the Milkipur victory, all five assembly segments of the Faizabad Lok Sabha constituency are now in BJP's kitty.

MILKIPUR BYPOLLS 2025

CHANDRABHANU PASWAN (BJP) 1,46,397 votes

AJIT PRASAD (Samajwadi Party) 84,687 votes

Milkipur was the only seat BJP lost in Ayodhya district in the 2022 Assembly polls when SP's Awadhesh Prasad won the seat

Bypoll was necessitated after Prasad vacated the seat following his Faizabad win in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls

ALL FIVE ASSEMBLY SEGMENTS OF THE FAIZABAD LOK SABHA CONSTITUENCY NOW IN BJP KITTY

Moreover, the win has provided the BJP with much-needed confidence as it has avenged the defeat in Faizabad during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. It is apparently a wake-up call for the SP with the state assembly elections due in 2027.

With the BJP working hard to regain some lost ground in the religious hub of Ayodhya after the 2024 drubbing at the hands of SP, the saffron party has now secured the Milkipur assembly segment with a more significant margin than what SP candidate Awdhesh Prasad had garnered in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections to defeat BJP's Lallu Singh.

The Milkipur victory has also cast a shadow of doubt on SP's 'PDA' election pitch. The opposition party had appealed to "pichre" (backward classes), Dalit and "alpashankhak" (minorities). to support the SP cause in the ballot box. However, the narrative failed to fetch results this time.

While a significant chunk of the Yadav vote bank showed a conspicuous shift towards the BJP, abandoning its conventional support for the SP, the turnout of Muslim voters, considered hardcore supporters of the SP, was comparatively low in Milkipur bypolls.

Moreover, the SP might have felt the pinch of not having a strong Brahmin face in its leadership, which proved to be a handicap in mobilising Brahmin voters in Milkipur where Brahmins make up a substantial 85,000 chunk of the total 3.70 lakh electorate.

While on one hand, the Milkipur outcome appears to have undermined the credibility of SP's 'PDA' strategy, it was apparently the BJP's over-arching poll pitch that helped it make inroads into every community, including Dalits, OBC and the upper caste.

The win also marked the BJP's sharp counter to the opposition's caste narrative, which was further spurred by accusations of "constitution under threat."

The SP, on the other hand, relied largely on its PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) narrative, which had worked for it in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections when it thrashed the BJP, bringing down its tally from 62 seats to 33 from the state. The SP also banked on the popularity of Awadhesh Prasad, who won the seat in 2012 and 2022, losing only once in 2017.

CM Yogi Adityanath termed BJP's victory as a symbol of unwavering faith of the common people in the public welfare policies of the 'double-engine government.'

SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, however, dismissed BJP's win as a "false victory": "BJP will never be able to celebrate... Their guilt and fear of future defeat will keep them awake."

Start packing your bag from Punjab too: Cong, SAD, BJP hit out at AAP

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

OPPOSITION leaders claimed on Saturday that the AAP's defeat in the Delhi assembly polls has set the ball rolling for its downfall in Punjab too.

Congress leaders said the party will have to capitalise on the AAP's weakened position to regain its lost ground in the state. "AAP's double standards have been exposed and the party may be extinct in coming days. The Delhi loss has exposed AAP's big governance claims," Punjab Congress president Amarinder Raja Warring said.

"AAP's double face was exposed as in Amritsar and other places it blatantly appointed mayors despite losing municipal elections," he said.

Punjab leader of opposition Partap Singh Bajwa said, "Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and others lost their seats because they were neck deep in corruption. They paid price for their misgovernance and arrogance."

"Kejriwal was adamant about running the government from jail, which was most unfortunate. When Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren had to go to jail, he resigned from the post," the Congress leader said.

Former Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal said, "People of Delhi have seen through the web of lies and deceit of the AAP and Kejriwal. AAP is also involved in massive corruption and diversion of funds in Punjab. The AAP leadership in Punjab has failed on all fronts and destroyed the state's economy. Punjabis should pack them off in forthcoming assembly elections."

Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar said, "Lotus has bloomed in Delhi after 27 years. Now PM Narendra Modi should make Punjab AAP-free. Punjabis are hoping the atmosphere of fear will end in Punjab under the PM's leadership and people will be able to live in peace."

Taking potshots at CM Bhagwant Mann, minister of state for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu claimed, "It's now his turn to pack the bags."

He said, "When the BJP comes to power in Punjab, no one will have to sell their house, and lands to go abroad. Everyone will get work here."

GUWAHATI DIARY

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR

Our correspondent in Guwahati

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Panbari Reserved Forest reopens for public

The Panbari Reserved Forest reopened for public last week, much to the joy of birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts. Located in the Eastern Assam Wildlife Division of Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve and a renowned birding site, the hill forest is rich with tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen forests. The forest reopened after years of limited accessibility – having been closed since 2009, abd briefly reopened in 2022. The site has garnered a reputation as one of the premier birding destinations in the region, boasting diverse flora and fauna. It has nearly 300 species of birds and over 400 species of butterflies.

Ban order: ULFA gets MHA notice under UAPA

The Centre issued a show-cause notice under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) to ULFA and associated factions calling upon the militant group to explain why it should not be declared an unlawful association for a period of five years with effect from November 27, 2024. ULFA has been called upon to explain in writing within 30 days of the service of the show-cause notice on why it shouldn't be adjudicated for declaring it an unlawful organisation. "ULFA has been directed to file its reply within 30 days from the date of service of the notice before the Register of the UAPA," an official statement said.

Guwahati airport introduces upgrades

To enhance passenger experience, Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport in Guwahati has introduced several upgrades, expanding the passenger area by 700 sqm to accommodate growing passenger numbers. Authorities said the number of departure gates have also been increased from five to seven. Entry and exit into the airport and parking area has been optimised. "To further enable seamless travel experience, LGBI Airport has created a traffic free lane on the kerbside. Retail and F&B outlets have been curated to provide a vibrant experience."

Lady sarpanch signs her rights on stamp paper

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhopal

PERHAPS a first-of-its-kind in the country, a woman sarpanch of a village in Neemuch district of Madhya Pradesh, has handed over her rights and duties (as village sarpanch) to a man from the same village on a ₹500 stamp paper.

Acting in the matter, the chief executive officer of the Neemuch District Panchayat has issued a notice to the concerned sarpanch, seeking a reply by Sunday on why she shouldn't be deprived of the sarpanch post. A notice has also been issued to the village panchayat secretary, asking him to explain the circumstances under which the development took place.

The incident happened in Daataa gram panchayat under Manasa block panchayat on January 24, but came to light, after the photo copy of the concerned contract between village sarpanch, Kailashi Bai Kachchava, and an individual, Suresh Garasiya, went viral over social media on Friday.

The contract, from the date of signing, confers all rights and duties as village sarpanch, including those pertaining to PM Awas Yojana, MGNREG Scheme and watershed mission, will be handed over to Garasiya.

Mumbai records 1st GBS case, tally rises to 180 in Pune; 7 new cases reported

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

A 64-year-old woman became the first patient diagnosed with Guillain-Barr' syndrome (GBS) in Mumbai on Friday while the tally of suspected cases of the nerve disorder in Pune region reached 180 with detection of seven new cases, officials said.

Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner Bhushan Gagrani said the patient was undergoing treatment in the ICU of a civic body-run hospital. BMC officials said the woman, resident of Andheri (East), was hospitalised with a history of fever and diarrhoea that was followed by ascending paralysis.

The woman was initially hospitalised on January 21. Within three days, she developed difficulty in walking and progressive weakness in her lower limbs, officials said. A provisional diagnosis of Acute Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy, a variant of GBS, was made based on clinical findings and diagnostic tests, they said, describing her condition as "moderate".

A health department release said, "Of the 180 suspected cases in Pune, 146 have been diagnosed with GBS. At least 35 patients are from Pune Municipal Corporation, 88 from newly added villages in the PMC area, 25 from the Pimpri Chinchwad civic limits, 24 from Pune Rural and eight from other districts. While 79 patients have been discharged, 58 are in ICU and 22 on ventilator support."

The number of deaths in the region stood at six, it added. Maharashtra health minister Prakash Abitkar said the state government will bring a law to ensure people have access to clean drinking water and also fine entities that contaminate and pollute water sources. "Pune Municipal Corporation and state health department have worked hard to ensure GBS cases are contained," he told reporters.

Guillain-Barr' syndrome tally

- **7** new cases identified
- **180** suspected cases in Pune
- **146** already diagnosed
- **79** patients discharged
- **58** admitted in ICU
- **22** on ventilator support
- **6** deaths recorded till date

MP shocker: 11-year-old girl with disabilities raped, dies

ANURAAG SINGH @ Bhopal

AN 11-year-old mentally-challenged girl with hearing and speech impairment, who was allegedly abducted and raped by unidentified accused in central Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district, died at a government hospital in Bhopal on late Friday night, after battling for her life for four days.

The ongoing probe into the incident has brought to fore the ugly face of caste panchayats, whose diktat on not making the ghastly crime public, delayed police action and also hindered specialised medical care to the hapless girl. Meanwhile, even after six days of investigation by multiple teams, Rajgarh district police remains clueless about the accused.

The minor who lived with his grandmother and uncle in a temporary settlement in Narsinghgarh town in Rajgarh, was reportedly abducted in her sleep on the intervening night of February 1-2. She was discovered by her kin on the morning of February 2 from under a tree in the neighbourhood.

Despite minor bleeding from private parts, her elderly grandmother and ailing uncle didn't report the matter to the police, but instead cleaned the minor's wounds and applied hair oil on it, worsening her condition.

According to informed sources, an illegal panchayat of elders of the caste (from which the girl hailed) decided on February 2, not to make the horrific episode public. Shockingly, the girl's kin even burnt the clothes she was wearing when she was abducted and allegedly raped, on the pretext that they had become dirty.

On February 3, however, people from the area saw blood stains near the thigh on the clothes she was wearing and reported it to the police.

A local police team rushed to the scene and took the minor for medical examination at a government hospital, where it was confirmed that she had suffered deep injuries in her privates, due to sexual assault.

While police registered a case of abduction and rape under BNS sections, provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) Act were also included in the FIR. The girl's kin were reluctant to proceed in the matter, claiming some wild animal might have attacked and injured the girl.

The girl was brought to state government-run Hamidia Hospital in Bhopal, where a team of doctors started treating her. "Two surgeries were performed in a day to stabilise her situation, as the wounds had turned septic and infection was spreading fast. But as the girl was severely malnourished (at the age of 11, she weighed just 15 kg), her condition started deteriorating on Friday, leading to her death," hospital sources said.

During the course of her treatment in Bhopal, her kin remained away. Rajgarh police personnel served as her attendants at the hospital.

Sources said once the accused is nabbed, police will act under provisions of the POCSO Act against those responsible for delayed reporting of the incident to the police.

> **Two surgeries were performed to stabilise her situation, as the wounds had turned septic and infection was spreading fast. But as the girl was severely malnourished (at the age of 11, she weighed just 15 kg), her condition started deteriorating on Friday, leading to her death**
>
> Sources

Nishank's daughter duped of ₹4 cr in film scam

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

A director associated with a Mumbai-based film producer has allegedly duped Aarushi Nishank, daughter of former Uttarakhand Chief Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, on the pretext of casting her as the heroine in a Hindi film.

Aarushi Nishank has filed a complaint at the Rajpur police station through her husband, Abhinav Pant, seeking justice for the alleged fraud amounting to a staggering ₹4 crore.

In a police complaint, Aarushi Nishank stated, "I work in the film industry through my partnership firm, Himshree Films, focusing on film production and acting."

According to the complaint, "Mansi Varun Bagla and Varun Pramod Kumar Bagla, residents of Fairy Land, Road 10, Kaifi Azmi Park, J.B. Nagar, Juhu, Mumbai, Maharashtra, contacted Aarushi at her residence in Dehradun and introduced themselves as the director of Mini Films Pvt Ltd."

The accused stated that they are set to produce a film titled 'Aankhon Ki Gustakhiyaan,' featuring renowned actors: Shanaya Kapoor and Vikrant Massey. "There is also another actress in a significant role; if she takes on this role, it will bring her immense fame and profit in the film industry," they added.

According to the FIR, the accused said, "We will only offer this role if she invests ₹5 crore either through her own firm or via someone she knows. This investment is projected to generate a 20% profit, which would amount to over ₹5 crore."

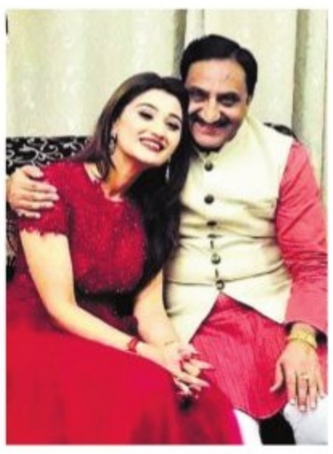
The accused also stated, "She will finalise the script for her significant role at her own discretion. If she does not like the role, the ₹5 crore amount given to Himshree Films Pvt Ltd will be returned with an annual interest of 15%."

In her complaint, Aarushi Nishank stated, "I signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Mini Films Pvt Ltd and Himshree Films on December 9, 2024, which led to my being defrauded of ₹2 crore on October 10, 2024."

Shortly after, the accused pressured her in various ways, contrary to the terms of the MoU, leading to an additional ₹1 crore being taken on October 19, 2024, and another ₹1 crore between October 27 and 30, 2024.

Aarushi Nishank emphasized, "The accused had assured me that they would promote me through their official pages and Instagram. When producers Mansi Varun Bagla and Varun Pramod Kumar Bagla initially tricked me into giving them ₹2 crore as the first installment, they promised that after the promotion and script finalisation, they would take the remaining ₹2 crore as the second installment."

However, neither the promotion took place nor was her role or script finalized in the film, resulting in a total fraud of ₹4 crore.



'Role to be offered only after ₹5 cr investment'

According to the complaint filed by Aarushi, the accused said they were set to produce a film titled featuring renowned actors: Shanaya Kapoor and Vikrant Massey, telling her "If she takes on the role, it will bring her immense fame and profit in the film industry." The accused said, "We will only offer this role if she invests ₹5 crore. The investment is projected to generate a 20% profit," adding, Aarushi will finalise the script for her role at her own discretion.

> **The accused had assured me they would promote me through their official pages and Instagram. When the producers... tricked me into giving them ₹2 crore as the first installment, they promised after the promotion and script finalisation, they would take the remaining ₹2 crore as the second installment** — Aarushi Nishank

First edition of WAVE Summit to be held in Mumbai from May 1-4

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

UNION information and broadcasting minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday announced the schedule of the first World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) envisaged for promoting discussions, collaboration, and innovation in the media and entertainment industry. The four-day event starting May 1 will take place at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai.

"India is laying the foundation for becoming the creative powerhouse of the world!" the Union minister declared on social media platform X.

"Following an inspiring meeting of the Advisory Board with PM Narendra Modi, the WAVES 2025 is levelling up to make India the global content hub! This summit will bring together the world's top media CEOs, biggest entertainment icons, and creative minds from across the globe – unifying entertainment, creativity, and culture like never before! Mark your calendars. Pack your dreams. Get ready to ride the WAVES!" Vaishnaw posted.

> **This summit will bring together the world's top media CEOs, biggest entertainment icons, and creative minds across the globe – unifying entertainment, creativity, and culture... Mark your calendars**
>
> Ashwini Vaishnaw, I&B minister

The Summit was originally slated to take place in November at Goa on the sidelines of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI). However it was moved to February.

PM Narendra Modi on Friday chaired an extensive meeting of the advisory board of WAVES via video conference. In a post on X, he wrote, "Just concluded an extensive meeting of the Advisory Board of WAVES, the global summit that brings together the world of entertainment, creativity and culture. The members of the Advisory Board are eminent individuals from different walks of life, who not only reiterated their support but also shared valuable inputs on how to further enhance our efforts to make India a global entertainment hub."

Ministry officials said the inaugural edition of the WAVES is a groundbreaking initiative, offering a global platform for creators across animation, visual effects (VFX), augmented reality-virtual reality (AR-VR), and virtual production.

To ensure maximum participation and scale up the event, the ministry has been reaching out to industry leaders in the country and abroad.

In latest round, 3 Israeli hostages, 183 Palestinian prisoners freed

Trump's proposal to takeover Gaza has not affected swap, but may impact next talks

Israeli captives, from left to right, Ohad Ben Ami, Eli Sharabi and Or Levy, are escorted by Hamas fighters before being handed over to the Red Cross in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, on Saturday | AP

DEIR-AL-BALAH

HAMAS released three gaunt, frail-looking Israeli hostages and Israel freed nearly 200 Palestinian prisoners on Saturday in the latest exchange of a ceasefire agreement that has paused the war in Gaza.

The hostages' condition and scenes of Hamas forcing them to speak in a handover ceremony sparked outrage in Israel and could increase pressure on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to extend the ceasefire beyond its six-week phase.

Netanyahu has signaled he would resume the war, even if that meant leaving dozens of hostages in Hamas captivity.

Before a crowd of hundreds, armed militants led Eli Sharabi, 52; Ohad Ben Ami, 56; and Or Levy, 34, onto a stage to make statements before handing them over to the Red Cross. The three civilian men were among about 250 people abducted during the Hamas-led attack on Israel on Oct 7, 2023, that sparked the war.

The joy of some Israelis watching their release turned to shock and tears when they saw their emaciated state. The men appeared in poorer condition than the 18 hostages previously set free.

Later Saturday, Israel released 183 Palestinian prisoners, some also appearing gaunt and weak. The Red Crescent said seven were taken to hospitals. It was the fifth exchange since the ceasefire began.

The Red Cross said it was "increasingly concerned about the conditions surrounding release operations" and urged all parties to ensure releases are dignified and private.

Many Palestinians released during the ceasefire have appeared emaciated and pale, and have alleged abuses in Israeli custody.

The hostages' condition and statements under duress — a departure from previous releases — sparked outrage in Israel. An Israeli Health Ministry representative, Dr Hagar Mizrahi, noted "severe malnutrition" and a "significant decrease" in body weight.

"We will not remain silent about this. A message has been passed on to the mediators, and action will be taken accordingly," said Gal Hirsch, Netanyahu's coordinator for hostages.

Hamas' military wing, the Qassam Brigades, said it had made efforts to preserve the hostages' lives "despite the (Israeli) bombardment."

The ceasefire's current phase does not appear to be affected by US President Donald Trump's stunning proposal to transfer the Palestinian population out of Gaza, welcomed by Israel but vehemently rejected by Palestinians and most of the international community.

But it could complicate talks over the second phase. *AP*

U.S. COURT HALTS PLAN TO PULL USAID STAFFERS

WASHINGTON

A federal judge on Friday dealt President Donald Trump and billionaire ally Elon Musk their first big setback in their dismantling of the US Agency for International Development, ordering a temporary halt to plans to pull thousands of agency staffers off the job.

US District Judge Carl Nichols, a Trump appointee, also agreed to block an order that would have given the thousands of overseas USAID workers the administration wanted to place on abrupt administrative leave just 30 days to move families and households back to the US on government expense.

Both moves would have exposed the US workers and their spouses and children to unwarranted risk and expense, the judge said.

Nichols pointed to accounts from workers abroad that the Trump administration, in its rush to shut down the agency and its programmes abroad, had cut some workers off from government emails and other communication systems they needed to reach the US government in case of a health or safety emergency.

USAID contractors in the Middle East and elsewhere had found even 'panic button' apps wiped off their mobile phones or disabled when the administration abruptly furloughed them.

"Administrative leave in Syria is not the same as administrative leave in Bethesda," the judge said in his order Friday night.

In agreeing to stop the 30-day deadline given USAID staffers to return home at government expense, Nichols cited statements from agency employees who had no home to go to in the US after decades abroad, who faced pulling children with special needs out of school midyear, and had other difficulties.

But the judge declined a request from two federal employee associations to grant a temporary block on a Trump administration funding freeze that has shut down the six-decade-old agency and its work, pending more hearings on the workers' lawsuit. *AP*

Trump's payback to Biden regarding intelligence briefing

President Donald Trump said on Friday that he's revoking former President Joe Biden's access to government secrets, ending the daily intelligence briefings he's receiving in payback for Biden doing the same to him in 2021. "There is no need for Joe Biden to continue receiving access to classified information," he wrote

President signs executive order to freeze aid to S Africa

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Friday formalising his announcement earlier this week that he'll freeze assistance to South Africa for a law aiming to address some of the wrongs of South Africa's racist apartheid era law the White House says amounts to discrimination against the white minority

Court blocks DOGE from accessing sensitive info

WASHINGTON

A federal judge early on Saturday blocked Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency from accessing Treasury Department records that contain sensitive personal data such as Social Security and bank account numbers for millions of Americans.

US District Judge Paul A. Engelmayer issued the preliminary injunction after 19 Democratic attorneys general sued President Donald Trump. The case, filed in federal court in New York City, alleges the Trump administration allowed Musk's team access to the Treasury Department's central payment system in violation of federal law.

The payment system handles tax refunds, Social Security benefits, veterans' benefits and much more, sending out trillions of dollars every year while containing an expansive network of Americans' personal and financial data.

Engelmayer, who was appointed by President Barack Obama, also said anyone prohibited from having access to the sensitive information since Jan 20 must immediately destroy all copies of material downloaded from Treasury Department systems. He set a hearing for Feb 14.

The White House previously did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit being filed. Musk has made fun of criticism of DOGE on his X social media platform while saying it is saving taxpayers millions of dollars. *AP*

AFTER 30 YEARS

3 Baltic states disconnect from Russian electricity grid

VILNIUS

THE flow of electricity between the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and Russia was officially severed on Saturday morning after officials switched off the Soviet-era grid's transmission lines and prepared to join the rest of Europe on Sunday.

This came more than three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, ending the Baltics' final ties to oil- and gas-rich Russia. For the three countries, as well as the rest of Europe, the move was steeped in geopolitical and symbolic significance.

"The Baltic energy system is finally in our hands, we are in full control," Lithuania Energy minister Zygimantas Vaiciunas told reporters.

On Saturday, all remaining transmission lines between them and Russia, Belarus and the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, wedged between EU members Poland and Lithuania and the sea, were switched off one by one. Lithuania first, then Latvia a few minutes later, then Estonia.

For 24 hours after detaching from the Soviet-era grid, the Baltic Power System will operate independently.

If all goes as planned, the power system will merge with the European energy networks on Sunday afternoon through several links with Finland, Sweden and Poland.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, as well as the presidents of Poland and the Baltic states, are expected for a ceremony in Lithuania on Sunday evening along with other dignitaries.

The Baltic countries, which are all NATO members, have often had chilly ties with Russia since declaring independence from the USSR in 1990 and relations soured further over Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Sixteen power lines that used to connect the Baltic states with Russia and Belarus were dismantled over in recent years. *AP*

EXPRESS READ

RESCUERS SEARCH FOR 30 PEOPLE AFTER LANDSLIDE

Beijing: Chinese rescuers searched for some 30 people after a landslide on Saturday in southwestern Sichuan province buried 10 houses and forced hundreds of residents to evacuate. The Ministry of Emergency Management deployed hundreds of rescuers including firefighters following the landslide in a village in Junlian county. Two people were pulled out alive and about 200 others were relocated, state broadcaster *CCTV* said. Rocks were seen rolling down since '24

PAKISTAN SEEKS 2-YEAR DELAY IN DEBT REPAYMENT

Islamabad: Pakistan has requested China to reschedule $3.4 billion debt for two years to bridge a foreign funding gap identified by the International Monetary Fund, according to a media report on Saturday. This is the second time in the past five months that Islamabad has requested Beijing to reschedule loans provided by its Exim bank. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar made the formal request during this week's visit to Beijing, *The Express Tribune* reported, quoting government sources.

WRECKAGE FOUND, SEARCHING BODIES

A small commuter plane that crashed in western Alaska was located on Friday on sea ice. All 10 people on board were found dead, authorities said. Rescuers were searching the aircraft's last known location by helicopter when they spotted the wreckage. They lowered two rescue swimmers to investigate. The Bering Air single-engine turboprop plane was traveling from Unalakleet on Thursday afternoon with nine passengers and a pilot. Officials said they lost contact with it less than an hour later. There was light snow and fog, according to the National Weather Service | AP

Chinese hack targets Canada's Chrystia

ONTARIO

A Canadian government department that tracks suspected foreign interference said on Friday it has detected a 'coordinated and malicious activity' targeting federal Liberal Party leadership candidate Chrystia Freeland.

A release from the Rapid Response Mechanism Canada, based at Global Affairs Canada, said the activity has been traced to a WeChat account linked to the Chinese government.

"The launch of this information operation was traced to WeChat's most popular news account 'an anonymous blog that has been previously linked by experts at the China Digital Times to the People's Republic of China," the release said.

"RRM Canada identified over 30 WeChat news accounts taking part in the campaign. The campaign received very high levels of engagement and views." The release said members of Freeland's campaign and the executive of the Liberal Party of Canada have been briefed on the findings.

Freeland responded to the news release with a post on X Friday evening.

"I will not be intimidated by Chinese foreign interference," said the former deputy prime minister. "Having spent years confronting authoritarian regimes, I know firsthand the importance of defending our freedoms."

It was Freeland's abrupt resignation as finance minister in December that forced Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to say he is resigning. *AP*

ASIA MATTERS

MINISTER LEE SAYS ADAPT TO NEW REALITY

Singapore must adapt to a "new reality" of a far less orderly and predictable international environment — one where the United States is no longer willing to underwrite global order, Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Saturday, *Channel News Asia* reported. Speaking at a Chinese New Year celebration dinner, Lee said that international geopolitics is "as tense as ever" with "much uncertainty" awaiting in the new year. Lee added that due to internal challenges and divisions, the United States administration approach is defining American interests more narrowly.

CIVIL SERVANTS TO WORK REMOTELY

The Indonesian government is considering allowing civil servants to work remotely twice a week to boost productivity and reduce operational costs, *Jakarta Globe* reported. To support President Prabowo Subianto's austerity measures, government officials have been instructed to eliminate non-essential trips and ceremonies.

Trump's quest to annex Canada is 'a real thing', reveals premier Trudeau

VANCOUVER

PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday said President Donald Trump's talk of making Canada the 51st US state is 'a real thing' and is linked to the country's rich natural resources, local media reported.

Trudeau's comments to business and labour leaders in a closed-door session were mistakenly carried by a loudspeaker, *CBC* reported.

"Mr Trump has it in mind that the easiest way to do it is absorbing our country and it is a real thing. In my conversations with him on," Trudeau said of making Canada a US state before the microphone cut out, according to *CBC*.

"They're very aware of our resources, of what we have and they very much want to be able to benefit from those," Trudeau reportedly said.

Trudeau's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In a post on X, Gil McGowan, president of the Alberta Federation of Labor, confirmed what Trudeau said.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

"Yes, I can confirm that Trudeau said his assessment is that what Trump really wants is not action on fentanyl or immigration or even the trade deficit, what he really wants is to either dominate Canada or take it outright," McGown wrote.

Trump has repeatedly suggested Canada would be better off if it agreed to become the 51st US state.

In public comments on Friday, Trudeau said Canada must think 'tactically and strategically' on how to deal with Trump's threats to impose hefty tariffs on all Canadian imports.

Speaking in Toronto at the opening of a one-day summit on the Canada-US economic relationship, Trudeau said the country must work with the US to avoid tariffs, adding that Canada needs to eliminate internal trade barriers and expand its trade with other nations.

"This is a moment," said Trudeau. "This is a time in our country's history that really matters." Trump on Monday agreed to a 30-day pause on threats to impose tariffs on imports from Canada. *AP*

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

grooms

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Boy settled in and around NY USA is most preferred.
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Your Guide to SPICY LIVING
INDULGE
Every Friday with THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that our clients have offered to purchase the immovable property described in the Schedule hereunder from its owner **Mrs.Manju Barggavee Harimohan,** wife of Mr.V.Hari Mohan Naidu, Daughter of Late M.Gangadhara Rao, residing at No.14, Charles Campbell Road, Cox Town, Bangalore : 560 005.

Any person/s having or claiming any manner of right, title, lien and interest in respect of the Schedule property may intimate the same in writing to the undersigned with documentary evidence in support thereof within **ten days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the claims of all such person/s shall be deemed to have been waived or abandoned and our clients will proceed with the conveyance as if no valid claims are subsisting against the Schedule property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of land together with the structures standing thereon comprising of Ground and First Floor bearing **Municipal Corporation No.14, PID No.85-32-14,** (Earlier bearing Municipal No.25, Old Site No.13), situated at **Charles Campbell Road,** Cox Town, Corporation New Ward No.79, Old Ward No.85, Bangalore and bounded on the :

EAST BY : Premises No.15, Charles Campbell Road;
WEST BY : Premises No.13, Charles Campbell Road;
NORTH BY : Premises No.20/1, belonging to Mr.T.R.Subramaniam;
SOUTH BY : Charles Campbell Road;

and measuring :
EAST to WEST : 54 feet;
NORTH to SOUTH : 80 feet;
Totally measuring in all 4320 Square feet;

NISSAR AHMED & RAGHAVENDRA, Advocates
No.40, Nandidurga Road, Bangalore 560 046.

Dated : 09.02.2025 Place : Bangalore

₹53 CR impounded by market regulator Sebi from fin-influencer Asmita Patel, five other entities who collected the amount as fees from course participants. These entities were also banned from markets

'Govt, RBI together on major issues'

FM says rate cut and income tax announcements will give a boost to private investments

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra and directors during meeting of Central Board of Directors of RBI, in New Delhi, Saturday | PTI

FINANCE minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said that both the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the government have been working in coordination, whether it is inflation or growth, and that neither of them encroaches into each other's territory. Sitharaman was addressing the media after attending the meeting of the Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank in New Delhi..

"There is good coordination between the government and the RBI, and the government will have similar coordination with the new governor (in future)," said the finance minister.

The RBI on Friday cut the repo rate for the first time in nearly five years, immediately after the announcement on income tax stimulus in the budget. The two together are expected to give a big boost to consumption growth.

The minister also expressed hope that the rate cut and the income tax announcements would give a boost to private investments. "...Going by the few inputs that I have had from some business leaders, orders for fast moving consumer groups for the period April-June are already getting booked, and the industry is clearly seeing the signs of a possible recovery of consumption. From these limited anecdotal inputs, we can safely see the triggers for a consumption-driven cycle are very clearly being helped by those who have to take the investment decisions," said the minister.

On the possible timeline for rollout of the new Income Tax Bill, Sitharaman said there are still three critical stages for the bill to pass before it can be rolled out. "I hope to introduce it in the coming week. After that it will go to a committee, which gives its recommendation. The bill then comes back, and the government through the cabinet takes a call whether these amendments are taken in or more needs to be done. It is only after that the Bill again goes to parliament, which if passes then only the bill can be rolled out," explained the finance ministry. Meanwhile, on the issue of rupee depreciation, the Reserve Bank governor said that there is no change in the stance of RBI on rupee.

"We don't target any price or price band for rupee. Our only aim is to check excessive volatility, we are not concerned about the day-to-day changes in the value of rupee. The forex market is very well-developed in the country and efficient, and we have faith in the market efficiency. We allow the market forces to decide the rupee value," said RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra.

He said the central bank is very mindful of the impact of rupee depreciation on inflation. "We are alert to all factors influencing inflation. As per our calculation and estimates, a 5% depreciation in the rupee leads to about 35 bps inflation. We have kept that in mind, and we will be watchful on that account," said Malhotra pointing out that most of the rupee depreciation has been a result of global uncertainties, especially Trump-related tariff announcements.

"Hopefully, that should settle down, and that should help us in the downward movement of inflation," says the RBI governor.

On liquidity concerns, the governor explained the various steps taken by the RBI to address transient and durable liquidity concerns.

"We have provided a pre-announced and assured one-day liquidity program for the transient liquidity. For durable liquidity, we have taken several measures. In the last MPC meeting, we had announced a 50 bps carsh reserve ratio (CRR) reduction. On 27th January, durable liquidity measures worth about ₹1.5 lakh crore were announced," said the governor, reiterating that the central bank is watchful, alert and nimble and agile in whatever are the requirements of the banking system to provide liquidity.

NEWSCOPE

A DIAMOND MAY NOT BE FOREVER

GURBIR SINGH

DEBEERS is learning the hard way. Diamonds are not forever. The miner, owned by the multi-national, Anglo American, has been synonymous for decades with the $80 billion global diamond industry. But today, with a slowdown in demand and a stockpile of $2 billion worth of roughs, Anglo American is considering a second write down after cutting DeBeers' valuation by $1.56 billion last year. It is also actively scouting for a buyer. For India's labour intensive diamond cutting and polishing industry all this is bad news.

Anglo American has reduced De Beers' 2025 production plan by 10 million carats to reflect "challenging rough-diamond trading conditions," it said in its fourth-quarter operational report. The company's 2024 earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) will be "marginally negative," the parent company projected.

It has been a crisis year. Sales for calendar 2024 fell 25% to $2.72 billion. The average price index, which tracks like-for-like rough prices at sights across the entire year, fell 20% compared with 2023.

The company is facing an inventory crisis with stock worth of $2 billion piling up, the largest since the 2008 meltdown. The downturn has reduced production by 22% to 24.7 million carats in 2024, and cut its outlook for 2025 to between 20 million and 23 million carats, compared with an earlier forecast of 30 million to 33 million carats.

China market contracts

The diamond industry is no stranger to boom-and-bust cycles, but what the takeaway from the DeBeers saga is there is a significant and permanent change for the worse. The trickle of lab-grown diamonds has become a flood, rapidly squeezing out natural stones, especially in fashion jewelry and low-end engagement rings.

There has been a steady fall in the production of rough natural diamonds. The Argyle mine in Australia is depleted, and major mines in Canada are also nearing exhaustion. The ban on trade of Russian diamonds as a part of the Ukraine sanctions imposed by the West has knocked out a major source of roughs. Russia produced 37.3 million carats in 2023, or roughly 35 percent of the global production.

This has resulted in natural diamond production diving to 111.5 million carats, an 8 percent drop from 2022, and a 20 percent drop in value, the lowest level since the Kimberley Process began publishing data. Despite the lower supply, the average price of a diamond fell 14% to $114 per carat.

On the other hand, the growth of the laboratory grown diamond is robust. From market sales valued at $22.79 billion in 2023, lab-grown diamonds are expected to grow to $74.45 billion by 2032. The growth projection for Indian lab-grown diamonds is $1,192.3 million by 2033 from $299.9 million in 2023 with the corporate backing of Tata Group's Trent and Senco Gold and Diamond. Pandora, the world's largest fashion jewelry company, too has launched a lab-created diamond line.

SOURAV ROY

Simultaneously, the industry is reeling from a collapse of the China market, which has plunged as much as 50 percent compared to the pre-pandemic levels. Demand for natural diamonds has 'fallen off a cliff' amid plunging marriage rates, while its factories are churning out synthetic alternatives that are up to 90 per cent cheaper, the South China Morning Post reported.

Not all newlyweds in China can afford a name-brand, natural diamond in today's tough economy. But many no longer want one, anyway. "They don't necessarily need something from Tiffany's," Vivian Wu, a 40-year-old founder of the Shanghai-based diamond business Wei An Shang Mao, was quoted as saying.

Crisis in India

India is not a producer of roughs, but is a big 'downstream' player as the largest cutting and polishing hub for stones and jewelry. The industry employs 1.3 million craftsmen mainly concentrated in towns around Surat and Mumbai; and exports polished stones and jewelry worth $18.2 billion.

However, the crisis in the industry is palpable now with a marked fall in both imports and exports over the last 3 years. There is a huge build-up of inventory of unprocessed roughs and a once vibrant industry is now struggling to survive. Thousands of units have shut down and many foresee a downturn of between 10 and 15 percent in both volume and value by 2030.

"The crisis has triggered defaults, factory closures, and widespread job losses. Tragically, more than 60 people in Gujarat's diamond sector have committed suicide, reflecting the severe financial and emotional strain India's diamond sector is facing," Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

After adjusting for re-exported rough diamonds, net imports declined by 25.3 per cent, from $17.5 billion to $13.1 billion, indicating reduced demand for processing in India. Exports of cut and polished diamonds fell by a higher margin of 34.6 per cent, from $24.4 billion in FY 2022 to $13.1 billion in FY 2024, the October 2024 GTRI report claimed.

It suggested a host of steps including extending export credit terms, exempting foreign rough diamond sellers from corporate tax in India; and reconsidering zero tariff import of cut and polished diamonds from Dubai under the India-UAE trade pact.

These measures could help moderate the crisis. However, till international demand picks up and natural diamonds find new markets, the industry will continue to be in the doldrums.

Income Tax Bill to make rules simpler, easy to read

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

THE Income Tax Bill, approved by the Cabinet on Friday, will not have any rate surprises. The bill is a major exercise in making the income tax rules simpler and easily comprehensible.

"You can expect simplicity, consistency and direct speech. This law will be written quite differently. What we are saying is that a law which has been amended more than 4,000 times, and has a lot of redundant provisions, can have a simpler rules, which even a salaried taxpayer can read and figure out what are his tax liabilities," says revenue secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey in an interaction with TNIE.

He said that worldwide there is a new way of writing laws which is more direct and clearer. Pandey clarified that there are no surprises in terms of tax structure, which he says would not be any different from what the finance minister has already announced.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced major relief to taxpayers in the recent Budget. She has increased the income threshold from ₹7 lakh to ₹12 lakh and changed the income tax slabs that will lead to a substantial reduction in tax burden for taxpayers under the new tax regime.

With these changes and the standard deduction of ₹75,000, an individual under the new tax regime with annual earnings up to ₹12.75 lakh will not have to pay any taxes.

"There are no other fundamental changes. There will be language change and that will help in reducing litigation. Interpretation creates a lot of litigation. We have made a very sincere effort in a very short time to clean them up (the ambiguities)," he said.

He further said that the bill will go to a parliamentary committee, and feedback would be invited on the same. "These are 1962 laws, which we are changing, so we must put our heads together," says Pandey.

Sithraman in her 2024 budget speech had announced 'a comprehensive review of the Income-tax Act, 1961'.

"The purpose is to make the Act concise, lucid, easy to read and understand. This will reduce disputes and litigation, thereby providing tax certainty to the taxpayers. It will also bring down the demand embroiled in litigation. It is proposed to be completed in six months," she had said in her budget speech in July 2024.

Meanwhile, speaking on the possible timeline for rollout of the Income Tax Bill, Sitharaman said there are still three critical stages for the bill to pass before it can be rolled out.

"I hope to introduce it in the coming week. After that it will go to a committee, which gives its recommendation. The bill then comes back and the government through the Cabinet takes a call whether these amendments are taken in or more needs to be done. It is only after that the Bill again goes to parliament, which if passed then only the bill can be rolled out," explained the finance ministry.

Amara Raja reports 10% rise in Q3 revenue to ₹3,164.02 crore

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

AMARA RAJA ENERGY & MOBILITY LIMITED (ARE&M), a leading player in the energy and mobility sector, on Saturday reported a 10% year-on-year (YoY) increase in revenue for the third quarter of the current financial year (FY25) at ₹3,164.02 crore.

Profit before tax (PBT) for the quarter stood at ₹422.16 crore, a 27% growth compared to the same period last year.

The company's earnings per share (EPS) saw rise of 23% YoY to ₹17.04. However, operational margins were impacted due to higher electricity expenses, resulting from the fuel and power purchase cost adjustment (FPPCA) approved by the Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission. Amara Raja's automotive and industrial battery businesses have shown strong performance, especially in the aftermarket and UPS segments. The company has expanded its presence in European markets, introducing its flagship Amaron brand in seven new countries. "Our Q3 results demonstrate the strength of our core business and our ability to consistently deliver value to our customers," said Harshavardhana Gourineni, executive director (automotive & industrial). "We are witnessing strong demand across both automotive and industrial segments."

Tilaknagar Inds' trademark plea dismissed

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

THE Bombay High Court has dismissed Tilaknagar Industries Ltd's (TI) plea in a trademark dispute over the brand Mansion House. The ruling allows Allied Blenders & Distillers Pvt. Ltd. (ABD) to introduce Mansion House-branded products in West Bengal, though a temporary stay has been granted to TI to file an appeal.

The case involves Mansion House and Savoy Club trademarks, with TI alleging that Herman Jansen Beverages Nederland B.V. and others attempted to pass off their alcoholic products under these names. The court has granted ABD's interim application allowing it to enter the West Bengal market with Mansion House-branded products. However, upon TI's request, the order has been put on hold for four weeks, during which ABD can't introduce its products under the disputed brand. TI plans to file an appeal before the division bench of the Bombay HC. The company clarified that it continues uninterrupted use and sale of Mansion House and doesn't foresee any immediate financial impact. It remains committed to safeguarding its business interests.

GRSE reports 11% rise in PAT to ₹98 crore

Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) has reported a profit after tax (PAT) of ₹98 crore in for the third quarter of the current financial year (Q3FY25) as against ₹88 crore in Q3FY24, registering a growth of 11%. Profit before tax (PBT) was ₹134 crore for Q3FY25 as compared to ₹119 crore in Q3FY24, a growth of 13%. The company's PAT stood ₹283 Crore for 9MFY25 as against ₹246 crore for 9MFY24, with a growth of 15%. Total income for Q3FY25 stood at ₹1343 crore as against ₹1,005 crore in Q3FY24, with a growth of 34%. Revenue from operations has increased to ₹1,271 crore in Q3FY25 from ₹923 crore in Q3FY24, registering a growth of 38%. Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation stood at ₹147 crore in Q3FY25 as against ₹130 crore in Q3FY24, with a rise of 13%.

Remarkable rise in budget grant for Railways in Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha

Kolkata: There has been a remarkable rise in Budget grant for Railways in West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha in 2025-26. Addressing a press meet via video conferencing from New Delhi, Railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said there has been a big allocation in the Budget pertaining to Railways. In this budget, there has been a record allocation of ₹13,955 crore for West Bengal against the average allocation of ₹4,380 crore during the period from 2009 to 2014. The Budget allocation of 2025-26 is 3 times more than the average Budget allocation of 2009-14. In the budget, the total outlay for Railways modernisation and expansion in Jharkhand is ₹7,306 crore against average outlay of ₹457 crore during 2009-2014. The Budget allocation of 2025-26 is 16 times more than average Budget allocation of 2009-14. For Odisha, there has been a total allocation of ₹10,599 crore for 2025-26 against average outlay of ₹838 crore during 2009 to 2014.

Business & Beyond

POWERGRID PAT at ₹3,862 cr, declares interim dividend of ₹3.25/equity share

POWERGRID, a 'Maharatna' CPSE under Ministry of Power, Govt. of India, has announced unaudited financial results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2024. The company has reported a consolidated PAT of ₹3,862 crore for the third quarter of the current financial year. The company's total income for the reporting quarter was ₹11,743 crore. For the nine months period (9MFY25), the PAT and total income on consolidated basis are ₹11,379 crore and ₹34,869 crore, respectively, and for the corresponding period of 9MFY24, the PAT and total Income were ₹11,407 crore and ₹34,608 crore, respectively. On standalone basis for 9MFY25, the PAT and total income were ₹11,017 crore and ₹33,843 crore, respectively, and for the corresponding period of 9MFY24, the PAT (including discontinued operations) and total income were ₹11,347 crore and ₹33,562 crore, respectively. POWERGRID's Board of Directors has declared second interim dividend of ₹3.25 per equity share of ₹10 each. This is in addition to first interim dividend of ₹4.50 per equity share for the FY2024-25.

UCO Bank signs MoU with PSB Alliance for financing operations

UCO Bank, a trusted name in the Indian banking industry, is delighted to announce signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with PSB Alliance. This collaboration aims to leverage advanced Digital Platform developed by Veefin Solutions to streamline and enhance supply chain financing (SCF) operations, enabling businesses to optimise their working capital with ease and efficiency. Under this partnership, UCO Bank will leverage Veefin Solutions digital platform through PSB Alliance to offer end-to-end, paperless financing for supply chain participants. This initiative aligns with the company's commitment to digital transformation, financial accessibility, and risk-optimised lending for businesses of all sizes. The bank's tie-up with PSB Alliance marks a major step in our mission to support businesses by providing quick and hassle-free financing solutions.

BOB profit rises 5.6% to ₹4,837 crore in Q3

Bank of Baroda (BoB) has reported a net profit of ₹4,837 crore, a growth of 5.6% YoY, for the third quarter of the current financial year (Q3FY25). Net profit for Q3FY25 stood at ₹4,837 crore, a growth of 5.6% YoY. Asset quality continues to be robust, with gross NPA falling below 2.5% at 2.43% for Q3FY25, a fall of 65 bps YoY. Net NPA ratio remained low at 0.59%, a fall of 11 bps YoY. Slippage ratio remained at 0.90% for Q3FY25 and 0.81% for 9MFY25. Credit costs remained below 1% on better asset quality at 0.30% for the quarter and 0.47% for 9MFY25. Balance sheet remained robust with healthy provision coverage ratio (PCR) of 93.51% with two & at 76.03% without two. Operating profit growth was supported by 34.1% YoY growth in non-interest income stood at ₹3,769 crore for Q3FY25.

Bencic bounces back for 1st title since maternity break

Belinda Bencic secured her first title since returning from maternity leave with a come-from-behind win (4-6, 6-1, 6-1) over USA's Ashlyn Krueger at the Abu Dhabi Open on Saturday. The Swiss Olympic gold medallist spent 13 months away from the tour and got back to action last October, just six months after giving birth to her first child Bella.

Reviving romance of Barabati

The venue in Cuttack doesn't hold the same significance it did in the past. **Gomesh S** tries to understand why & what needs to be done for the stadium to get to the next level

AS one turns right from Cantonment road towards the Stadium Road in Cuttack on Saturday evening, one is greeted by the sight of a long line of fans waiting to enter the Barabati Stadium. As one gets closer to the venue gates, the crowd gets larger. In fact, every road in the quaint but historic city on the banks of Mahanadi River leads to the Barabati Stadium this weekend with banners and decorations lighting up the city for the second ODI between India and England on Sunday.

A fan holds aloft the tricolour at Barabati Stadium on Saturday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

Sunday Special

The cricket carnival has well and truly arrived in Cuttack. The fans, who have been waiting to enter, slowly fill up the stands on the eastern side. They are here to watch the stars of Indian cricket team train. Every movement of players like Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli received loud cheers as the crowd was allowed on the other side of the stands after one side got full.

The excitement is understandable. The fans don't get to see the India team that often. This historic stadium, not in the lines of Mumbai, Kolkata, Kanpur or Chennai (historically), used to hosts international matches more regularly. It was on the fixture during the two World Cups India hosted before turn of the century. Slowly with more venues with modern facilities coming up in the country, the number of matches dried up. The last ODI played at this venue was in 2019. India played a T20I against South Africa in June 2022 but the Barabati Stadium doesn't hold the significance it did among the venues across India. Owned and operated by the Orissa Olympic Association (OOA), it is one of the oldest sporting venues in the country. It dates back to 1961 when Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) played East Zone in a first-class match. The stadium went on to host only the third ODI played in India in 1982, followed by its first Test match when India played Sri Lanka in 1987. Former India head coach and captain Ravi Shastri vividly remembers the match against England in 1984. K Srikkanth fell on 99 but Shastri went to become the first player to score an international hundred at the venue. "How can I forget that memory?" Shastri recalls on the sidelines of an event in Cuttack on Saturday. "That is the most memorable one. I think it was a 9 o'clock start. I opened with K Srikkanth. He got out on 99. But I got that hundred."

From thereon till early 2000s, the stadium was one of the regular venues in India as it hosted the 1987 and 1996 World Cup games. However as years went by, the stadium went down in the pecking order. It hasn't hosted a Test match in 20 years but ODIs and T20Is are played based on the rotational policy that is put in place by the BCCI. Pankaj Lochan Mohanty, acting president of Odisha Cricket Association, believes that the stadium needs a major upgrade to take it to the next level. "It was supposed to get renovated, this is a very old stadium. We have all the facilities, have made partial renovations as you can see. We have been in talks with the government," Mohanty said.

With the government changing in 2024, the OCA is continuing their talks with the new government for support. "Without government funding, we cannot do a complete overhaul," Mohanty explains. "BCCI will support with their infrastructure fund, but we need government support. The new government, they are also keen to develop. They wanted to build another stadium. As there are so many stadiums now, we are getting matches once every two years. So, this stadium will go to waste (if a new cricket stadium is built)...."

Full story: newindianexpress.com

3 The Barabati Stadium in Cuttack hosted only the third ODI to be played in the country in January 1982. India beat England by five wickets in that tie.

102 Former India head coach Ravi Shastri was the first player to score a century at the venue. He scored 102 against England in 1984. In the same match, K Srikkant got out on 99.

3 The venue hosted two men's Tests between 1985 and 1995 with India winning the former against Sri Lanka. It also hosted the women's Test between India and New Zealand in 1985.

3 Cuttack was home for two men's (1987 and 1996) and one women's World ODI Cup (2013) matches.

20 The upcoming second ODI between India and England will be the 20th men's 50-over tie at the venue.

Fit-again Kohli returns as India look to seal ODI series

TANMAY DAS @Cuttack

EVEN before the India team reached the Barabati Stadium for practice, the venue started to fill. As the players went about their drills, the crowd went crazy. Coach Gautam Gambhir was having an animated discussion with captain Rohit Sharma, some were warming up yet all eyes were on one player -- Virat Kohli, who missed the last one-day match against England in Nagpur due to a sore knee.

It was natural when batting coach Sitanshu Kotak walked in for the customary pre-match conference. The first question was about the star batter. "Kohli is fit, yes, he is practicing with us today, he is good to go," Kotak confirmed on Saturday.

Out in the middle, Kohli padded up and spent some time at the nets, cheered on by more than 20,000 fans. He began with short sprints, without any strapping on his legs, moved with ease and he also batted in the nets and did not look in any discomfort either.

Virat Kohli during a practice session in Cuttack on Saturday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

Kotak joined Gambhir and Sharma in their discussion. The India captain fell early in Nagpur continuing his poor run from the longer format. However, Kotak is not worried too much. "I personally don't see any issue with his form. In his last three ODIs, Rohit has scored 56 (58), 64, and 35 (in Sri Lanka last year). We are talking about a player who has 31 ODI centuries. When someone keeps scoring, no one questions when they will fail they do," Kotak said, before adding, "Sometimes when somebody gets out or is going through a lean patch, I don't think I would be worried about their form. Yes, in Australia Test series – that was a tough time. About the one-dayers, the way he batted in the last three one-dayers before the first match (in Nagpur), he has always been scoring runs. So, not really so much concern about that."

While Sharma spent some time in the nets, Shreyas Iyer, Shubman Gill, Hardik Pandya, Mohammed Shami, and Harshit Rana were not spotted in what seemed like an optional training session. With the team management opting to play Yashasvi Jaiswal in Nagpur, it could be a toss-up between Iyer and Gill, both scored fifties, if they stick to the same combination. Kotak said that the captain and head coach will take the final call. In the middle-order, India have a problem of plenty with KL Rahul and Rishabh Pant fighting for a spot.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Points to ponder

AS THE SERIES MOVES TO THE EASTERN PART OF THE COUNTRY, A LOOK AT SOME TALKING POINTS AHEAD OF THE SECOND ODI IN CUTTACK...

ROHIT UNDER PRESSURE

As much as batting coach, Sitanshu Kotak, said there is no issue, Rohit Sharma will be under immense pressure when he walks out to bat on Sunday. Another failure here in the lead up to the Champions Trophy will not look good for the Indian captain.

ARSHDEEP AND VARUN ON RADAR

With just two games before the Champions Trophy, if India wanted to take a look at Varun Chakravarthy and Arshdeep Singh, this would be it. While the pacer is already in the squad, whether Varun gets included or not might depends on when and how be plays.

BROOK LOOKING TO TURN TIDE

From the time he landed in India, Harry Brook has had a horror run across formats. While he might still score runs in Pakistan, England vice-captain would take any runs he can get to build his confidence.

INDIA VS ENGLAND, 2ND ODI, CUTTACK
LIVE ON STAR SPORTS AND HOTSTAR, 1.30 PM

Nidheesh scalps five to reduce J&K to 228 for 8

AGENCIES @ Pune

FOR Kerala it was a good start. At least until Day 1 of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal match against Jammu and Kashmir. Medium pacer MD Nidheesh scalped five wickets to help Kerala restrict J&K to 228 for eight. Nidheesh (5/56) spelt trouble for Jammu and Kashmir batters from the start, picking up wickets at regular intervals after Kerala opted to field. He accounted for the wickets of openers Shubham Khajuria, Yawer Hassan, Vivrant Sharma, wicket-keeper Kanhaiya Wadhwan and Lone Nasir Muzaffar. He was ably supported by Basil Thampi (1/31), left-arm spinner Aditya Sarwate (1/32) and Nedumankuzhy Basil (1/59), who accounted for one wicket each.

Suryakumar Yadav being dismissed by Sumit Kumar on Saturday | PTI

BRIEF SCORES: J&K 228 for 8 in 86 ovs (K Wadhawan 48, L Nasir Muzaffar 44; Nidheesh MD 5/56) **vs Kerala**; **Mumbai** 278/8 in 81 ovs (S Mulani 91, T Kotian 85 no) **vs Haryana**; **Vidarbha** 264 for 6 in 89 ovs (K Nair 100 no; D Malewar 75; V Shankar 2/50) **vs TN**. **Saurashtra** 216 in 72.1 ovs (C Jani 69, A Vasavada 39 n.o, C Pujara 26; Chintan Gaja 4/48) **vs Gujarat** 21/0 in 5 ovs (P Panchal 11 n.o).

Mumbai fight back

KOLKATA: Mumbai's eternal crisis men Shams Mulani and Tanush Kotian once again stood tall amid ruins with a 165-run stand for the eighth wicket as the defending champions staged an impressive fightback to reach 278 for 8 against Haryana in their quarterfinal tie.

Having opted to bat, Mumbai batting unit comprising former Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane (31), T20I skipper Suryakumar Yadav (9), batting all-rounder Shivam Dube (28) were down in the dumps at 113 for 7. But once the moisture dried up, Eden strip became a batting paradise as usual with Mulani (91, 178 balls) and Kotian (85 batting, 154 balls) making full use of the loose deliveries.

Nair scores ton against TN

NAGPUR: Karun Nair continued his dream run with the bat, scoring an unbeaten century to help Vidarbha reach 264 for six on the opening day of their quarterfinal against Tamil Nadu here on Saturday.

Gujarat take control

Skipper Chintan Gaja bowled a probing line to grab four wickets as Gujarat restricted Saurashtra to a lowly 216 to gain upper-hand on the opening day of their quarterfinal tie.

Rising sprinter Animesh in spotlight

AGENCIES @ Dehradun

ODISHA'S rising star Animesh Kujur clocked Games record-equalling time of 10.28 seconds to win the men's 100m gold medal in a top-class field on the opening day of athletics competitions at the National Games here on Saturday. Out of the 10 gold medals on offer on the day, Maharashtra and Services picked up two each, while Odisha, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Tamil Nadu claimed one each.

The 21-year-old Kujur, who has a personal best time of 10.27 seconds, equalled the Games record of 10.28 seconds set by Amlan Borgohain of Assam, while winning gold at the 2022 edition in Gujarat.

Kujur is the 100m silver medallist at both the Federation Cup and National Inter-State Championships in 2024. Maharashtra's Pranav Gurav was the surprise silver winner with a time of 10.32 seconds, while Borgohain was third with 10.43 seconds. Maharashtra's Sudeshna Shivankar ran away with the women's 100m gold, clocking 11.76 seconds, while Nithya Gandhe (11.79) of Telengana and Giridharani Ravikumar (11.88) of Tamil Nadu were second and third respectively. Sawan Barwal of Himachal Pradesh won gold in the men's 10,000m final with a Games record time of 28:49.93, bettering the earlier mark of 28:54.29 set by Gulveer Singh in the 2022 edition in Gujarat.

Animesh Kujur (C), Pranav Gurav (L) and Amlan Borgohain on Saturday | X

OTHER RESULTS

Men's Long Jump: Gold: Shahnavaz Khan (Uttar Pradesh) - 7.70m; Silver: V Sriram (Tamil Nadu) - 7.59m; Bronze: Anurag CV (Kerala) - 7.56m. Men's 1500m: Gold: Yoonus Shah (Services) - 3:46.48; Silver: Ritesh Ohre (Madhya Pradesh) - 3:46.64; Bronze: Ram Singh (Uttarakhand) - 3:50.24.; **Women's discus throw:** Gold: Seema (Haryana) - 52.70m; Silver: Bhavana Yadav (Delhi) - 51.82m; Bronze: Amanat Kamboj (Punjab) - 49.94m.; **Women's pole vault:** Gold: Pavithra Venkatesh (Tamil Nadu) - 3.95m; Silver: Baranica Elangovan (Tamil Nadu) - 3.90m; Bronze: Mariya Jaison (Kerala) - 3.90m. PTI PDS

EXPRESS READ

Jeev improves to T-24 in Trophy Hassan golf

RABAT (MOROCCO): Jeev Milkha Singh improved on his first round and shot 1-under 72 to get to even par for two days at the Trophy Hassan II, an event on the Champions Tour PGA. Jeev, playing his first seniors event in 2025, rose from T-33 to T-24 with one more round to go.

Gukesh qualifies for knockout stage

HAMBURG: World Champion D Gukesh qualified for the knockout stage in the first event of the Freestyle Grand Slam Tour, despite losing to the world's highest-rated player, Magnus Carlsen of Norway, in the ninth and final round of the qualifiers.

Maguire's late strike helps Man Utd win

MANCHESTER: Harry Maguire scored a controversial injury-time winner as Manchester United came from behind to beat Leicester 2-1 and move into the last 16 of the FA Cup on Friday. Manchester City survived a huge scare to beat third-tier Leyton Orient 2-1 and progress to the fifth round on Saturday. In Munich, two second-half penalties from Harry Kane and a tap-in from substitute Leroy Sane gave Bayern Munich a 3-0 win over Werder Bremen on Friday and a nine-point lead in the Bundesliga.

Real task winning CT & also beating India: Pak PM

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says the real task for Pakistan is not just winning the ICC Champions Trophy but also defeat India in Dubai on February 23. "We have a very good side and they have done well in recent times but the real task now is to not only win the CT but also defeat our arch-rival, India in the upcoming match in Dubai."

Memorable victory for Chennaiyin FC in ISL

AGENCIES @ Kolkata

TWO first-half goals and another late strike were enough as Chennaiyin FC (CFC) beat East Bengal FC 3-0 on Saturday on what was a memorable outing for CFC head coach Owen Coyle and playmaker Connor Shields, as both reached personal milestones in the Indian Super League. A Nishu Kumar own goal gave Chennaiyin the lead in the 13th minute before Wilmar Jordan Gil doubled the lead eight minutes later (21'). Daniel Chima Chukwu added a third in the ninth minute of second-half stoppage time after Lalchungnunga was sent off for the hosts. By the touchline, Coyle watched over his 100th ISL match, becoming the first non-Spaniard and Chennaiyin FC head coach to hit that mark.

CFC's Connor Shields and Lalrinliana Hnamte (top) celebrate a goal

It was Shields, whose moment of genius broke the deadlock in the 13th minute. Racing beyond the goalkeeper after latching onto a Wilmar pass, Shields, dangerous as usual, smartly flicked the ball into the danger zone with his heel; an unsuspecting Nishu, in an attempt to clear it, ended up flicking it into his own net. With the involvement in the goal, Shields created his 66th chance of the campaign, breaking the record for most chances created in a single season. In Hyderabad, Hyderabad FC defeated Mohammedan Sporting Club 3-1 in a match between two bottom-placed teams. Allan Paulista (24'), Ramhlun-chhunga (45+1') and Joseph Sunny (90+6') scored for Hyderabad FC.

Ramkumar & Myneni fail to cross final hurdle

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

The Indian duo of Ramkumar Ramanathan and Saketh Myneni finished as runners-up in the doubles event of the Chennai Open ATP Challenger after going down to Japan's Shintaro Mochizuki and Kaito Uesugi in Saturday's final. The Japanese pair won 6-4, 6-4 at the SDAT Tennis stadium, Nungambakkam.

Saketh Myneni (L) and Ramkumar Ramanathan with the runners-up trophy on Saturday | MARTIN LOUIS

The unseeded Japanese duo of Mochizuki and Uesugi broke the serve of defending champions Ramanathan and Myneni once in each set to win the doubles trophy in one hour and seven minutes. This was the second ATP Challenger doubles title for Uesugi and for Mochizuki, who won the Wimbledon boys' singles title in 2019. In the singles draw, unseeded Swede Elias Ymer stunned top seed Billy Harris of Great Britain 7-6, 7-6 to reach the final. His opponent will be Frenchman Kyrian Jacquet, who ousted Czech Dalibor Svrcina 6-4, 6-1 in the first semifinals of the day.

This was also the first meeting on the pro tour between the two players. **Results: Singles: Semis:** Elias Ymer (SWE) bt Billy Harris (GBR) 7-6, 7-6; Kyrian Jacquet (FRA) bt Dalibor Svrcina (CZE) 6-4, 6-1. Doubles: Final: Shintaro Mochizuki (JPN)/Kaito Uesugi (JPN) bt Saketh Myneni (IND)/Ramkumar Ramanathan (IND) 6-4, 6-4.

Blue is the warmest colour: MI Cape Town bag SA20 title

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @Johannesburg

THE one truism in T20 cricket? Mumbai Indians and their sister concerns around the world just win. The New York side won the inaugural Major League Cricket. The Emirates outfit, part of the International League T20, won in 2024. Mumbai Indians, the OG, wrote the grammar on how to be a successful, trophy-laden franchise. MI Cape Town? For the first two years of the side's existence, they were in danger of being classed as the runt of the litter. In 2023, in the SA20's inaugural edition, and 2024, they finished bottom.

Hello. This wasn't normal.

Normalcy was restored in 2025 as MI Cape Town, in front of owner Akash Ambani, won the third edition of the SA20. The Rashid Khan-led side beat Sunrisers Eastern Cape, back-to-back defending champions, by 76 runs. As soon as they won, fireworks erupted across the night sky to signal a first-time winner at a heaving stadium, with some fans coming in a good 150 minutes before the start of the final. Opting to bat first on a surface with runs in it, they made 181 in their quota of 20 overs. Even if several of their star players had cameos to their name — both Dewald Brevis and Ryan Rickelton made attractive 30s apart from hitting more sixes than fours (15 compared to seven, it's normally the other way around in this format) — there was a feeling that they were short of a few runs. There was one significant caveat, however. Sunrisers Eastern Cape's strong suit throughout the tournament has been their bowling. Their batting? Not so much. Skipper Aiden Markram had come on record many times to say the same thing. And so it proved as a misfiring batting unit fell short. Losing a wicket early has been a thing SEC have done all season. Across 13 matches including the final, their average first-wicket partnership was 18.84 (for comparison, MI Cape Town's was 44.45). To be fair, David Bedingham and Tony de Zorzi had one of the hardest tasks up front — not losing a wicket against Kagiso Rabada and Trent Boult. Boult bowled the perfect powerplay spell of 3-0-4-1 while Rabada applied finishing touches to end up with four wickets.

Dewald Brevis' 18-ball 38 helped MI Cape Town finish with a 181/8.

Brief scores: MI Cape Town 181/8 in 20 ovs (Rickelton 33, Esterhuizen 39, Brevis 38) **bt** Sunrisers Eastern Cape 105 in 18.4 ovs (Abell 30; Rabada 4/25, Boult 2/9, Linde 2/20).

WHY AMENDED FOREST LAWS ARE UNDER JUDICIAL LENS

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

ON February 3 this year, the Supreme Court issued an interim order restraining the Central and state governments from cutting down forest areas if there is no provision of compensatory land. This was the third consecutive order of the Supreme Court ever since the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023 or FCA 2023 was enacted and challenged in the court. The amendment Act was meant to clarify and address concerns surrounding a swathe of deemed forests.

A deemed forest is defined as one that is not on the forest department's records. However, several government records consider it as forest. About 1.99 lakh sq km of land are said to fall under the deemed forest category in the country. The court's interim order came on a batch of petitions challenging the constitutionality of the FCA 2023, which the petitioners claim excludes nearly 1.99 lakh sq km of forest land from the definition of "forest".

The petitions urged the court to strike down the amendments to save the forests.

The petitioners argued that the Supreme Court's 1996 TN Godavarman judgment mandated the protection of forests regardless of classification or ownership or deemed forests. They cited the biennial 'India State of Forest Report', which takes all categories of forests into its sweep, including deemed forests. As per its latest report, tree cover accounts for 25.17% of the country's geographical area.

A two-judge bench led by justices B R Gavai and K Vinod Chandran on February 3 directed the Centre to submit a status report in three weeks. The court said it will not allow any reduction in forest area without compensatory land being provided. The next hearing is scheduled for March 4.

This was not the first interim order on the validity of FCA 2023. On February 19, 2024, the then Chief Justice of India, D Y Chandrachud, directed the government to go by the 1996 TN Godavarman verdict. "Pending the completion of exercise by the administration of the State Governments and Union Territories, under Rule 16, the principles which are elucidated in the judgment of this court in TN Godavarman must be continued to be observed. As a matter of fact, it is evident that Rule 16 includes within its ambit forest-like areas to be identified by the expert committee, unclassed forest lands and community forest lands. In the interregnum therefore, while being guided by the provisions of the statute and those contained in Rule 16, the State Governments and UT administrations shall peremptorily ensure compliance with the ambit of expression "forest" as explained in the decision in TN Godarman," the 2024 order of the top court said. It also directed the government to provide full data on deemed forests collated by State Expert Committees (SEC) constituted after the Godavarman verdict. All those records shall be compiled and digitised by the ministry and uploaded on its official website by April 15, 2024, the bench ordered. (see box: What is TN Godavarman judgment)

Though the government complied with the directive, experts and petitioners questioned the data's reliability. "What we found in the report uploaded on the website was unsubstantiated and sketchy with no proper collated data," said Prakriti Srivastava, former Indian Forest Service officer and one of the main writ petitioners against the FCA 2023.

Prerna Singh Bindra, a well-known environmentalist and another petitioner, doubted whether all states prepared the reports with due diligence. "The one report we had of Kerala and later of Assam are indicative that most reports are generic, without geographic locations, boundaries and extent. They are poor, shoddy, sloppy jobs; lacking ground truthing and cadastral surveys," she charged.

Changing dynamics of forest governance

The Forest Conservation Act, 1980, amended and renamed as Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Act, 2023, drew criticism ever since it was in the draft stage.

Environmentalists and conservationists expressed concern over its intent. Six out of 31 members of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) constituted to examine the bill, filed dissent notes, raising alarm over the exemption given to a significant expanse of land in the proposed legislation.

The new law, they argued, changed the whole dynamics of forest governance, which could lead to severe forest loss in the coming days.

The amendments, they argued, diluted many conservation provisions, including the protection of deemed forests. Also, they gave abundant powers to the state governments to notify the rules and guidelines without prior permission from the Central government for clearing any unclassified or deemed forest.

The new law, the activists charged, favours diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes in lieu of money for afforestation instead of the land-for-land arrangements under the previous law. The old law was clear on this — if the government diverts a piece of land to an agency for non-forestry purposes, then the agency should provide an equivalent piece of non-forest land for afforestation.

"It sounds like 'blood money' for our forest land and hugely damaging to the country's forest," said Srivastava. "We have enough money through different schemes like CAMPA or Green India Mission (GIM) for afforestation, which remains unspent," she added.

Srivastava underscored another critical point in the legislation that could promote the error of double counting of the forest land. "Forest areas that are diverted for non-forest purposes like dams, canals or roads are lost forever, but they continue to be treated as forest land on record," she pointed out.

Further, the amended law exempts the requirement of the forest department's clearance for the use of forest land for a number of non-forestry purposes. For example, it exempts the forest department's clearance to build defence establishments and public utilities on forest land within 100 km of the international border. Also on the exempted list is forest land alongside railways and roads and notified forest land up to 10 hectares for building security infrastructure. The waiver includes the establishment of zoo/safari and ecotourism facilities on such land.

"The new law promotes the commercialisation of Reserve Forests and irreversible disturbance to wildlife," says Debadityo Sinha, a forest law expert.

Soon after its enactment, some retired Indian forest officials, environmentalists and activists feared it would destroy the country's forest resources and the livelihoods of millions of people dependent on them.

They approached the court, demanding an interim stay of the guidelines and rules issued by MoEFCC, reinstatement of the Godavarman case judgment, which was being violated through the amendment, and examination of the SEC reports on documentation of deemed forest land prepared after the 1996 judgment.

Also, some voices of dissent from the South emerged against the Act's renaming from English to Sanskrit as *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam*, 1980.

Threat to Forest Rights Act

The petitioners claim that the FCA 2023 amendment transgressed the landmark Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA), which gives communities or forest dwellers rights over their habitation and natural resources to sustain their livelihood.

After writing off approximately 1.99 lakh sq km of forest areas from the purview of forest governance, the new law opened a window for government agencies to divert forest land for non-forestry purposes, the petitioners argued. Lakhs of forest dwellers, especially tribals, will lose their rights over their lands, which they got under the FRA 2006, they added. However, there is no clear data on how much FRA-approved land is being given to forest dwellers located in deemed forests and recorded forests. But some anecdotal facts are interesting.

"In my research on 12 revenue villages in tribal areas of Odisha, which encompassed over 3,634 acres, I found only less than 3% of forest land in government's record while the rest of the land was outside forest," said Manohar Chauhan, an expert on the implementation of the FRA.

Taking a large swathe of land away from forest governance could create a direct confrontation between states and forest dwellers. "The new law will violate FRA by undermining the power of the Gram Sabha (village council) and trigger conflict between state government and tribals," said Tushar Dash, another independent researcher on the FRA. He claimed that the previous laws had a better mechanism of checks and balances that empowered the locals.

Another charge against the MoEFCC is that it did not seek the views of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (NSCST) during its consultation process for the FCA 2023. "It is mandatory to consult NSCST if any laws impact tribal or forest dwellers," said Ritwik Datta, a petitioner and founder of environment advocacy organisation, LIFE.

WHAT IS THE GODAVARMAN JUDGMENT?

TN Godavarman Thirumulpad was a retired forest officer who filed a case in the Supreme Court of India to protect forests in 1995. His petition was against illegal timber operations in the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu. The case is considered a major intervention in India's environmental law enforcement and forest preservation history as the court ordered that the government go by the dictionary meaning of the term, forest.

FINDINGS THE STATE OF FOREST REPORT, 2023

FOREST AND TREE COVER OF THE COUNTRY IS

8,27,357 sq km

which is 25.17% of the geographical area of India. The break-up: 7,15,343 sq km (21.76%) is forest cover and 1,12,014 sq km (3.41%) tree cover

- As compared to assessment of 2021, there is an increase of 1,445 sq km in the forest and tree cover of the country
- Top four states showing maximum increase in forest and tree cover are Chhattisgarh (684 sq km) followed by Uttar Pradesh (559 sq km), Odisha (559 sq km) and Rajasthan (394 sq km)
- Area wise top three states having largest forest cover are Madhya Pradesh (77,073 sq km) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (65,882 sq km) and Chhattisgarh (55,812 sq km)
- In terms of percentage of forest cover as against the total geographical area, Lakshadweep (91.33%) has the highest forest cover followed by Mizoram (85.34%) and Andaman & Nicobar Island (81.62%)
- 19 states/UTs have over 33% of their geographical area under forest cover
- Total growing stock of India's forest and trees outside forests is estimated as 6,430 million cum, of which 4,479 million cum is inside the forests and 1,951 million cum outside the forest area
- There is an increase of 262 million cum of total growing stock as compared to the previous assessment, which includes an increase of 91 million cum inside the forest and 171 million cum outside the forest area

THE OTHER ILLEGAL MIGRATION IN THE NORTHEAST

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

THE issue of illegal migration is in the spotlight. Again. The Supreme Court pulled up the Assam government last week following its submission that 63 declared foreigners could not be deported as their addresses were not available. The court issued an order seeking the initiation of the deportation process. Deportation, however, is a complex issue as it transcends the national boundary.

Supreme Court whiplash

A bench of justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said those declared as foreigners should be deported immediately and not languish in detention centres indefinitely. "Once they are held to be foreigners, they should be deported immediately. You know their citizenship status, so how can you wait till their address is received?" the bench said, insisting on the next logical step after a person is declared as a foreigner. The court asked the Assam government if it was waiting for some "muhurat" and ordered it to start the deportation process within two weeks and file a compliance affidavit.

But according to a senior Assam government official, any decision on deportation has to be taken by the Central government. "We have already written to the Government of India and we will write again. We cannot deport illegal immigrants because it is a Central subject. Therefore, any decision on the matter has to be taken by the Government of India. Deportation, if any, will be executed by the BSF. Secondly, the Bangladesh government will have to accept the persons we deport," the official said on the condition of anonymity.

Housing illegal immigrants

Six district jails served as the detention centres before the country's biggest such facility at Matia in western Assam's Goalpara district opened in 2023. In August 2021, the state government had replaced the phraseology "detention centres" with considerably-softened "transit camps" to give them a "humane" touch.

Currently, the Matia transit camp is the only facility that houses the declared foreigners. The 63 in question are from among the 270 lodged here, mostly believed to be from Bangladesh and Myanmar (Rohingya Muslims). An estimated 750 others are out on bail after undergoing detention for at least two years. Many of them are fighting their cases in court. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Supreme Court had issued an order directing the government to release those illegal immigrants, who spent more than two years in detention, subject to fulfilment of conditions, including submission of a verifiable address of stay after release.

Categories of illegal migrants

Deportation becomes easy when the illegal immigrants admit they are nationals of another country or when documents recovered from their possession suggest they are from another nation. They could be arrested under the relevant sections of law for overstaying or for entering India without valid documents. The process becomes difficult for those who claim they are Indians but have been declared "foreigners" by the foreigners' tribunals for failing to produce documents to prove their Indian nationality. As for Bangladesh, it will not accept immigrants unless there are sufficient grounds to prove they are its citizens. Myanmar refuses to accept the Rohingyas.

Basis to declare a person foreigner

Illegal immigrants are detected based on the March 24, 1971 cut-off date of the Assam Accord signed in 1985 after the historic Assam Agitation, which was spearheaded by the All Assam Students' Union. The accord says the illegal migrants, who arrived in Assam after March 24, 1971, are to be detected and deported. The 1951 National Register of Citizens (NRC) was updated based on the March 24, 1971 cut-off date.

Foreigners tribunals

Foreigners' tribunals are quasi-judicial bodies which deal with the cases of people with doubtful nationality. Assam's border police send notices to individuals when they suspect them to be not Indians. Once a person receives the notice, he or she has to appear before a foreigners' tribunal and prove nationality with documentary evidence. They have to prove that their forefathers lived in Assam before March 24, 1971. Those who cannot are declared as "foreigners", arrested and sent to the detention centre. Some fight their cases in court. There are several instances when people were eventually declared as Indians by the judiciary. Some die carrying the "Bangladeshi" tag. Sometimes, people are declared foreigners ex-parte when they miss multiple summons for appearance at a foreigners' tribunal.

Lawyers' take

Hafiz Rashid Ahmed Choudhury, a senior lawyer at the Gauhati High Court, said despite being Indians, some people often face harassment for failing to link their name to their parents or grandparents.

"The slightest of discrepancies in name or age may lead to a person being declared a foreigner. For example, a man named Burhanuddin goes for Haj and becomes "Haji Burhanuddin". The tribunal says there is Haji in your name and you are a different person. He got the Haji adjective because he went for Haj," Choudhury explained.

"There are cases where a man is an Indian but his son has been declared as a foreigner, or a person is an Indian but his sister has been declared a foreigner. The Supreme Court, perhaps, got a sense of such harassment and asked the government to deport the persons. Will Bangladesh accept them?" Choudhury, who has fought the cases of many declared foreigners, wonders.

F Z Mazumder, another lawyer of the Gauhati High Court, said roughly around 80% of those declared foreigners or are facing trials in the foreigners' tribunals are women, irrespective of whether they are Hindus or Muslims.

"They are mostly poor and in their forties or fifties. They hail from rural areas where girls are considered a liability and married off early. Fifty years ago, we did not have the kind of road connectivity or health facilities like what we have today. They were born at home and have no birth certificates. They were married off before they had attained the age of 18 years. Their names are on the voters' list along with their husbands and therefore, there is no linkage with parents. It is very easy to suspect them to be foreigners because linkage to parents cannot be traced through documents. When they are issued notices, they cannot submit any documents to establish their linkage with their parents which is necessary," he said.

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